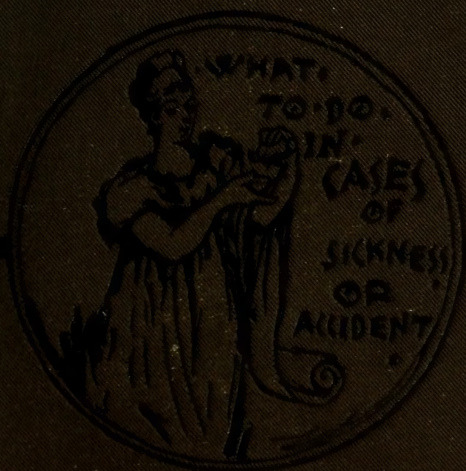




# HOME- TOPICS.





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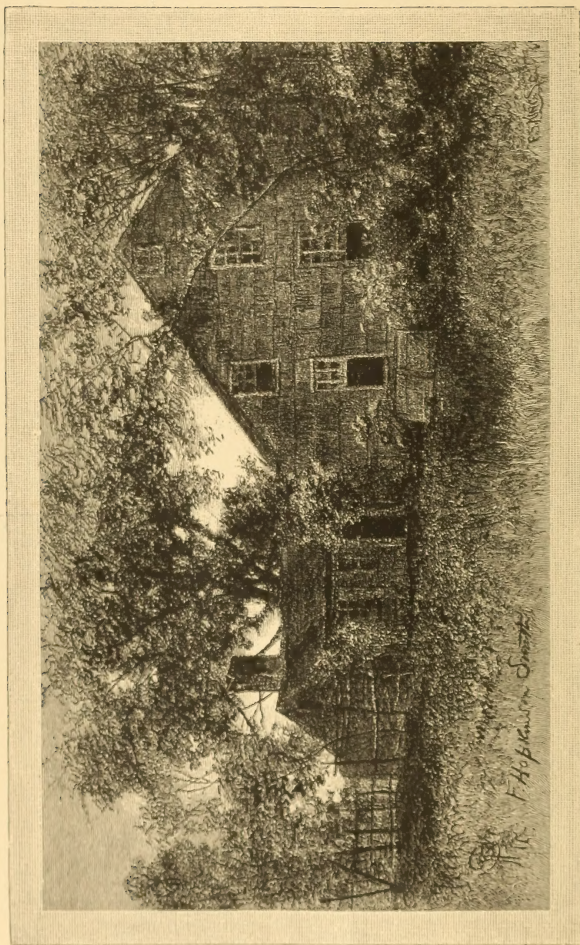












"HOME, SWEET HOME," THE BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN HOWARD PAYNE.

# HOME TOPICS:

A BOOK OF

## PRACTICAL PAPERS ON HOUSE AND HOME MATTERS.

WITH SUGGESTIONS AS TO THE CARE AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN,  
HOME DECORATION AND AMUSEMENTS, WINDOW GARDENING,  
PRACTICAL FLORICULTURE, THE TREATMENT OF  
THE SICK, VACATIONS, ETC., ETC.

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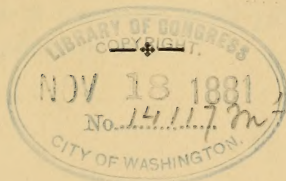
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## PREFACE.

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THE present volume is designed to be preëminently a useful book. There is no one writer whose single pen would be able to originate such a wealth of suggestion on topics of home life as may be found within these covers. Here are gathered together many of the brightest as well as many of the most helpful thoughts of a number of the best-known American writers, constituting a series of papers on domestic matters which, for variety and practical suggestiveness, it would be hard to match in the compass of one book.

The sources from which all these hints, discussions, reflections, and directions have been drawn are the successive issues of "Scribner's Monthly" (now "The Century Magazine") and "St. Nicholas"; and in order to discover the various papers and paragraphs in their original setting, one would have to search diligently through the eleven years of the former magazine and the eight years of the latter.

"Home Topics" will, it is believed, furnish instruction and amusement for the young as well as for the old of every family. It is hoped that it will be found a valuable friend and companion in all seasons of the year, in all parts of the country, and among "all conditions of men."





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# HOME TOPICS.

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## PART I. THE HOUSEHOLD.

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### *CHEERY PEOPLE.*

THERE is but one thing like them—that is sunshine. It is the fashion to state the comparison the other end foremost—*i. e.*, to flatter the cheery people by comparing them to the sun. I think it is the best way of praising the sunshine, to say that it is almost as bright and inspiring as the presence of cheery people.

That the cheery people are brighter and better even than sunshine is very easily proved; for who has not seen a cheery person make a room and a day bright in spite of the sun's not shining at all—in spite of clouds and rain and cold all doing their very best to make it dismal? Therefore, I say, the fair way is to compare the sun to cheery people, and not cheery people to the sun. However, whichever way we state the comparison, it is a true and good one; and neither the cheery people nor the sun need take offense. In fact, I believe they will always be such good friends, and work so steadily together for the same ends, that there is no danger of either's grudging the other the credit of what has been done. The



more you think of it, the more you see how wonderfully alike the two are in their operation on the world. The sun on the fields makes things grow—fruits and flowers and grains; the cheery person in the house makes everybody do his best—makes the one who can sing feel like singing, and the one who has an ugly, hard job of work to do, feel like shouldering it bravely and having it over with. And the music and mirth and work in the house, are they not like the flowers and fruits and grains in the field?

The sun makes everybody glad. Even the animals run and leap and seem more joyous when it shines out; and no human being can be so cross-grained, or so ill, that he does not brighten up a little when a great, broad, warm sunbeam streams over him and plays on his face. It is just so with a cheery person. His simple presence makes even animals happier. Dogs know the difference between him and a surly man. When he pats them on the head and speaks to them, they jump and gambol about him just as they do in the sunshine. And when he comes into the room where people are ill, or out of sorts, or dull and moping, they brighten up, spite of themselves, just as they do when a sudden sunbeam pours in—only more so; for we often see people so ill they do not care whether the sun shines or not, or so cross that they do not even see whether the sun shines or not. But I have never yet seen anybody so cross or so ill that the voice and face of the cheery person would not make them brighten up a little.

If there were only a sure and certain recipe for making a cheery person, how glad we would all be to try it! How thankful we would all be to do good like sunshine! To cheer everybody up, and help everybody along!—to have everybody's face brighten the minute we came in sight! Why, it seems to me that there cannot be in this life any pleasure half so great as this would be. If we looked at life only from a selfish point of view, it would be worth while to be a cheery person, merely because it would be such a satisfaction to have everybody so glad to live with us, to see us, even to meet us on the street.

People who have done things which have made them famous, such as winning great battles or filling high offices, often have what are called "ovations." Hundreds of people get together and make a procession, perhaps, or go into a great hall and make speeches, all to show that they recognize what the great man has done. After he is dead, they build a stone monument to him, perhaps, and celebrate his birthday for a few years. Men work very hard, sometimes, for a whole lifetime to earn a few things of this sort. But how much greater a thing it would be for a man to have every man, woman, and child in his own town know and love his face because it was full of kindly good cheer! Such a man has a perpetual "ovation," year in and year out, whenever he walks on the street, whenever he enters a friend's house.

"I jist likes to let her in at the door," said an Irish servant one day, of a woman I know, whose face was always cheery and bright; "the face of her does one good, shure!"

I said if there were only a recipe—a sure and certain recipe—for making a cheery person, we would all be glad to try it. There is no such recipe, and perhaps if there were, it is not quite certain that we would all try it. It would take time and trouble. Cheeriness cannot be taught, like writing, "in twenty lessons"; nor analyzed and classified and set forth in a manual, such as "The Art of Polite Conversation," or "Etiquette Made Easy for Ladies and Gentlemen." It lies so deep that no surface rules of behavior, no description ever so minute of what it is or is not, does or does not do, can ever enable a person to "take it up" and "master" it, like a trade or a study. I believe that it is, in the outset, a good gift from God at one's birth, very much dependent on one's body, and a thing to be more profoundly grateful for than all that genius ever inspired, or talent ever accomplished. This is natural, spontaneous, inevitable cheeriness. This, if we were not born with it, we cannot have. But next best to this is deliberate, intended, and persistent cheeriness, which we can create, can cultivate, and can so foster and cherish, that after a few years the world will never suspect that it was not a hereditary gift

handed down to us from generations. To do this we have only to watch the cheeriest people we know, and follow their example. We shall see, first, that the cheery person never minds—or if he minds, never says a word about—small worries, vexations, perplexities. Second, that he is brimful of sympathy in other people's gladness; he is heartily, genuinely glad of every bit of good luck or joy which comes to other people. Thirdly, he has a keen sense of humor, and never lets any droll thing escape him; he thinks it worth while to laugh, and to make everybody about him laugh, at every amusing thing; no matter how small, he has his laugh, and a good hearty laugh, too, and tries to make everybody share it. Patience, sympathy, and humor—these are the three most manifest traits in the cheery person. But there is something else, which is more an emotion than a trait, more a state of feeling than a quality of mind. This is lovingness. This is the secret, so far as there is a secret; this is the real point of difference between the mirth of the witty and sarcastic person, which does us no good, and the mirth of the cheery person, which “doeth good like a medicine.”

Somebody once asked a great painter, whose pictures were remarkable for their exquisite and beautiful coloring: “Pray Mr. —, how *do* you mix your colors?”

“With brains, madam—with brains,” growled the painter. His ill-nature spoke a truth. All men had or might have the colors he used; but no man produced the colors he produced.

So I would say of cheeriness. Patience, sympathy, and humor are the colors; but patience may be mere doggedness and reticence, sympathy may be wordy and shallow and selfish, and humor may be only a sharp perception of the ridiculous. Only when they are mixed with love—love, three times love—do we have the true good cheer of genuine cheery people.

---



*"HE THAT SWEARETH TO HIS OWN HURT  
AND CHANGETH NOT."*

WE were talking about it, very solemnly, the other night, the minister and I, and this is the little sermon he preached:

The trouble lies back of all theories, all talk of reform and liberty and law and what not. The advocacy of easy divorce, or whatever form this horror of the day assumes, is only possible when one's apprehension of life is false from the beginning. They talk about one's life being blasted by an uncongenial union; of failing thus to accomplish the purposes of one's life; of an empty existence:—as if a life teeming with duty could be, by any means, called vacant,—as if a career could be blasted by infelicity, or an existence fail of its true purposes because of the burden laid upon it! Who shall limit the purposes of his existence! Who shall flee, a coward, from the cross laid upon him, and declare that he does well! Surely not he who believes that giving is gaining; that only he finds his life who loses it.

The modern world is coming back to the first principles in the means of attack, the art of defense, in the building of ships, bolts, earth-works, fish-shaped hulls,—and in many other things;—the newest is the oldest. So, in religion, the "reformers" are preaching the ancient worship of that goddess of self and sense; and the unselfish Christ, as of old, puts these false prophets to shame.

---

*MEN AND WOMEN.*

AMONG all the burdens that woman is called upon to bear, there is none that can be made so galling to her as the burden of dependence. Man is usually, in the life of the family, the bread-winner. However much he may be helped by woman

in the economies of home life, he is usually the one who earns and carries the money on which the family subsists. Whatever money the woman wants comes to her from his hands, as a rule. Now, this money can be given into her hands in such a way that she can not only preserve her self-respect, but rejoice in her dependence; or it can be given to her in such a way that she will feel like a dog when she asks for it and when she receives it—in such a way that she will curse her dependence, and mourn over all the shame and humiliation it brings to her. We are sorry to believe that there are multitudes of wives and daughters and sisters, who wear fine clothing and who fare sumptuously every day, who would prefer earning the money they spend to receiving it from the ungracious and inconsiderate hands upon which they depend.

If we had entitled this article "A Study of Husbands," it would have led us more directly, perhaps, to our main purpose; but the truth is that what we have to say has to do with dependent women in all the relations of life. It is natural for woman, as it is for man, to desire to spend money in her own way—to be free to choose, and free to economize, and free to spend whatever may be spent upon herself or her wardrobe. It is a delightful privilege to be free, and to have one's will with whatever expenditures may be made for one's own conveniences or necessities. A man who will interfere with this freedom, and who will deny this privilege to those who depend upon him, is either thoughtless or brutal. We know—and women all know—men who are very generous toward their dependents, but who insist on reserving to themselves the pleasure of purchasing whatever the women of their households may want, and then handing it over to them in the form of presents. The women are loaded with nice dresses and jewelry, and these are bestowed in the same way in which a Turk lavishes his favors upon the slaves of his harem. Now, it is undoubtedly very gratifying to these men to exercise their taste upon the necessities and fineries of their dependent women, and to feast themselves upon the surprises and the thanks of those receiving their favors; but it is a superlatively selfish performance. If

these women could only have had in their hands the money which these gifts cost, they would have spent it better, and they would have gratified their own tastes. A man may be generous enough to give to a woman the dresses and ornaments she wears, who is very far from being generous enough to give her money, that she may freely purchase what she wants, and have the great delight of choosing.

This is one side—not a very repulsive one—of man's selfishness in his dealings with women; but there is another side that is disgusting to contemplate. There are great multitudes of faithful wives, obedient daughters, and "left over" sisters, to whom there is never given a willing penny. The brute who occupies the head of the family never gives a dollar to the women dependent upon him without making them feel the yoke of their dependence, and tempting them to curse their lot, with all its terrible humiliations. Heaven pity the poor women who may be dependent upon him—women who never ask him for money when they can avoid it, and never get it until they have been made to feel as meanly humble as if they had robbed a hen-roost!

There is but one manly way in treating this relation of dependent women. If a man recognizes a woman as a dependent,—and he must do so, so far, at least, as his wife and daughters are concerned,—he acknowledges certain duties which he owes to them. His duty is to support them, and, so far as he can do it, to make them happy. He certainly cannot make them happy if, in all his treatment of them, he reminds them of their dependence upon him. We know of no better form into which he can put the recognition of his duty than that of an allowance, freely and promptly paid whenever it may be called for. If a man acknowledges to himself that he owes the duty of support to the women variously related to him in his household, let him generously determine how much money he has to spend upon each, and tell her just how much she is at liberty to call upon him for, *per annum*. Then it stands in the relation of a debt to the woman, which she is at liberty to call for and to spend according to her own judgment.

We have watched the working of this plan, and it works well. We have watched the working of other plans, and they do not work well. We have watched, for instance, the working of the plan of the generous husband and father, who says : " Come to me for what you want, whenever you want it. I don't wish to limit you. Some years you will want more, and some less." This seems very generous ; but, in truth, these women prefer to know about what the man thinks they ought to spend, or about what he regards as the amount he can afford to have them spend. Having gained this knowledge by a voluntarily proffered allowance, they immediately adapt their expenditures to their means, and are perfectly content. It is a comfort to a dependent woman to look upon a definite sum as her own—as one that has been set aside for her exclusive use and behoof.

A great multitude of the discomforts that attach to a dependent woman's lot arise from the obtuseness and thoughtlessness of the men upon whom they depend. There are some men so coarsely made that they cannot appreciate a woman's sensitiveness in asking for money. They honestly intend to do their duty—even to deal generously—by the women dependent upon them, but they cannot understand why a woman should object to come to them for what they choose to give her. If they will ask their wives to tell them frankly how they can improve their position, these wives will answer that they can do it by putting into their hands, or placing within their call, all the money per annum which they think they can afford to allow them, and not compel them to appeal to their husbands as suppliants for money whenever they may need a dollar or the quarter of one.

The absolutely brutal husband and father will hardly read this article, but we recall instances of cruelty and insult toward dependent women that would make any true man indignant in every fiber. A true woman may legitimately rejoice in her dependence upon a true man, because he will never make her feel it in any way ; but a brute of a husband can make a true woman feel her humiliation as a dependent a hundred times a day, until her dependence is mourned over as an unmitigated curse.



*HOLIDAYS FOR MIDDLE-AGE.*

WHEN the fires are beginning to burn on library and parlor hearths in the evenings, and the curtains to be drawn close, and the most devout lover of Nature gives up the stroll in shady lanes, or the row on the moonlit river, and comes in-doors for the winter, it is worth while to consider what is to be done in-doors. The work is ready for everybody who chooses to do it; but the relaxation, the rest, the stimulant, which is to fit us for the work—what is that to be? For fashionable classes, this matter of amusement is ruled in almost as inflexible grooves as drudgery for the poor: for men or young people, too, it adjusts itself naturally. The father of a family has his clubs, his share in the political or church meeting, or, at least, his quiet newspaper, cigar, and slippers, at home—precisely the drowsy reaction he needs after the friction of the busy day. The boys and girls have their concerts, their lectures, the thousand devices of “sociables,” “accidentals,” etc., by which they contrive to flock together, to chirp like young birds in May, and, perhaps, to mate like them. But the wives and mothers, the great aggregate of women no longer young—what is to be their tonic? They certainly need a tonic. The American mother of a family is the real maid of all work in it, and the more faithful and intelligent she is, the more she usually tries to deserve the name. She may work with her hands or not (in the large majority of cases, she does work with her hands), but it is she who, in any case, oversees and gives life to a dozen different interests. Her husband's business, the boys' education, the girls' standing in society, the baby's teething, the sewing and housework for them all, are all processes which she urges on and which rasp and fret daily and hourly on her brain—a very dull, unskilled brain, too often, but almost always quite willing to wear itself out for those she loves. Whether it would be nobler or more politic in her to shirk this work,—husband, babies, and house,—and develop her latent talents as physician, artist, or saleswoman, is not the question with us just now. A few women have

done this. In the cities, too, money can remove much of the responsibility from the mistress of a household; but the great aggregate of wives and mothers in this country are domestic women who ask nothing better of fate than that whatever strength they have of body and mind shall be drained for their husbands and children. Now this spirit of martyrdom is a very good thing—when it is necessary. For our part, we can see no necessity for it here. We are told that the women's wards in the insane asylums in New England are filled with middle-aged wives, mothers driven there by overwork and anxiety; through the rest of the country the popular type of the woman of forty is neither fat nor fair, but a sallow, anxious-eyed creature, with teeth and hair furnished by the shops, and a liver and nerves which long ago took her work, temper, and we had almost said religion, out of her control. This rapid decay of our women may be owing partly to climatic influence, but it is much more due to the wear and tear of their motherhood, and anxiety to push their children forward, added to the incessant petty rasping of inefficient domestic service.

A man's work may be heavier, but is single—it wears on him on one side only; he has his hours sacred to business, to give to his brief, his sermon, his shop; there is no drain on the rest of his faculties or time. His wife has no hour sacred to this or to that; he brings his trouble to her, and it is her duty to comprehend and aid him, while her brain is devising how to keep her boy Tom away from the companions who brought him home drunk last night; how to give Jenny another year of music lessons; how to contrive a cloak for the baby out of her old merino; the burning meat in the kitchen all the while “setting her nerves in a quiver.” She has not a power of mind, a skill of body, which her daily life does not draw upon. Her husband comes and goes to his office; the outdoor air, the stir, the change of ideas, the passing word for this man or that, unconsciously refresh and lift him from the cankering care of the work. She has the parlor, the dining-room, the kitchen, to shut her into it, day after day, year after year. Women, without a single actual grief in the world, grow

morbid and ill-tempered, simply from living in-doors, and resort to prayer to conquer their crossness, when they only need a walk of a couple of miles, or some wholesome amusement. It is a natural craving for this necessity—amusement—which drives them to the tea-parties and sewing-circles which men ridicule as absurd and tedious.

There is no reason why our women, who are notably rational and shrewd in the conduct of the working part of life, should cut themselves off thus irrationally from the necessary relaxation, or make it either costly or tedious. Let every mother of a family resolve not to put off her holidays until old age, but to take them all along the way, and to bring a good share of them into this winter. Let her give no ball, no musical evenings, no hot, perspiring tea-parties, but manage to have her table always prettily served and comfortably provided, and her welcome ready for any friend who may come to it; let her set apart an evening, if possible, when her rooms shall be open to any pleasant friend who will visit her; the refreshment to be of the simplest kind; and, above all, if the table chance *not* to be well served, or the friends are *not* agreeable, let her take the mishap as a jest, and meet all difficulties with an easy good-humor. It is not necessary to take every bull of trouble by the horns; if we welcome and nod to them as to cheerful acquaintances, they will usually trot by on the other side of the road.

Let her take our prescription for the winter, and our word for it the spring will find fresher roses in her cheeks and fewer wrinkles in her husband's forehead.

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### THE HOSPITALITY WE SHOULD LIKE TO SEE.

“DO you ever thoroughly enjoy receiving company?” said a lady to us not long ago. “For my part, I am so occupied with the fear that my guests will not be sufficiently entertained that I have no time to enjoy them.” Most Amer-

ican housekeepers will confess to something of this feeling. Even in our best-appointed households, there is not that absence of care in the deportment of the lady of the house which is seen in French or English drawing-rooms. Her thoughts cannot help wandering to the kitchen, even in the midst of the most animated conversation. She knows full well that after all those endeavors which have made her somewhat too weary to be quite at her best in looks or manner, there may be a failure in serving the repast. It is curious to see what a different woman she is after supper, if all has gone well. For the time she is safe, and exuberant with a sense of relief.

When our guests are staying with us for a day or a week, matters are somewhat better, because so much is not attempted ; but still there is often an unnaturalness and constraint which makes itself felt, even through the most scrupulous politeness. Much of this is no doubt owing to our unsatisfactory and precarious domestic service. Arthur Hugh Clough said : " The only way to live comfortably in America is to live rudely and simply ; " and while we should not like to agree to his statement seriously, there are moments of despair, it must be acknowledged, in which we feel the force of it. But there is a deeper reason than this for our discomfort, and happily it is one which it lies in our power to remedy. Somehow or other, the idea has become chronic with us that we must entertain our visitors according to their style of living rather than our own. If a friend comes who has no larger a *menage* than we, it is all very well ; we make no special effort, and are thoroughly and simply hospitable. But let a distinguished foreigner or an " American prince " visit us, and everything is changed. We have an indistinct idea of what he is accustomed to at home, and nothing short of that will content us. We put ourselves to torture to devise how to entertain him worthily, forgetting that what is unusual is always obviously so, and that he will detect the thin veneering of style, and either pity or sneer at us, according to his nature.

There is with us Americans an inborn dislike to be surpassed ; it is at once our strength and our weakness ; giving us



a stimulus to endeavor in great things, and causing a belittling anxiety in small ones. Far better in family affairs is French simplicity, that gives its best, whether poor or otherwise, without shame or ostentation; that makes no guest uncomfortable by a suggestion of unusual expense or fatigue. If we could only understand it, we should feel that what our guests desire, if they are right-minded persons, is a glimpse of our real life: they come to us to know us better—not to have a repetition of their home experiences. True hospitality makes as little difference as possible for the stranger or the friend; it infolds each at once in its warm atmosphere; and if he be a guest worth entertaining, he will prefer a thousand times such a home-welcome to the display which has no heart in it. Especially with the foreigners who come to our shores is this true. They are away from their homes and families; they tire of receptions and state dinners; and the kindest thing we can do for them is occasionally to vary the programme by a quiet, friendly chat at the family fireside. And for all whom we entertain, that which we have decided to be right and proper for us in private should be the measure of our public doings. Consistency in this particular would relieve many a guest as well as many an entertainer. “I pray you, O excellent wife,” says Emerson, “not to cumber yourself and me to get a rich dinner for this man or this woman who has alighted at our gate, nor a bed-chamber made ready at too great a cost. These things, if they are curious in, they can get for a dollar at any village. But let this stranger, if he will, in your looks, in your accent and behavior, read your heart and earnestness, your thought and will, which he cannot buy at any price, in any village or city, and which he may well travel fifty miles, and dine sparsely and sleep hard, in order to behold. Certainly let the board be spread, and let the bed be dressed for the traveler; but let not *the emphasis of hospitality lie in these things.*”

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*DAILY CHARITIES.*

THERE is a queer, one-sided notion of charity which a very large number of people, especially religious, conscientious women of small means, are apt to adopt, and to carry out rigidly in their daily domestic lives. It is, that duty requires them to save money in every legitimate way, and then give a certain amount to the church or to the poor. A certain little woman that we know inexorably sets aside a tenth of her small income for charity,—a most admirable resolve, as everybody will acknowledge. But, in order to increase this tithe, she lays burdens on herself, her husband, and her servants, hard to bear. Diet in her system is reduced to its plainest and least tempting conditions; economy is brought to bear on the quality of the meat, its seasoning—the very coal, and the time required for its preparation. The boys sit down day after day the year round to the bare, uninviting table with its coarse cloth and meager dishes of oatmeal porridge, and stewed apples, or chops and potatoes, which they know have been counted before they were boiled. Their mother wonders why their appetites flag, and why her dinner-table is never the pleasant, jolly place of meeting which the boys declare their Aunt Rousby's to be. She “will not think so ill of her sons,” she declares, “as to believe that their tempers would be improved, or their love for their mother quickened, by occasional gratification of their stomachs,” or, as she puts it, “their carnal appetites.” But the fact remains that the Rousby boys are rosy and happy, and as long as they live will remember mother's custards or chicken-pie as a way in which she showed her love for them, while their cousins know and care nothing about their mother's hours of prayer and wakefulness on their behalf. This charitable woman, too, wears the coarsest and ugliest costumes for the sake of economy and self-mortification, and yet is miserable because her husband has long ago ceased to pay her lover-like compliments, and so often notices Jane Rousby's rosy cheeks and pretty breakfast-caps. In a word, she makes her home bare, niggardly, uninviting to her husband and sons, and drives them elsewhere for

amusement and comfort. She is mean to the very outer edge of honesty in her dealings with butcher, milkman, and baker. She hires her servants at the lowest wages, and takes advantage of the hard times to bring down the washerwoman's pay per dozen to starvation rates. She has traffic in a small way with twenty poor people,—hucksters, cobblers, sewing-women,—all struggling honestly to keep soul and body together through this hard year. Liberal pay for their labor, a few pennies here, a dollar there, given as wages, not alms, with hearty praise for work well done, would have helped many a sore heart and warmed many a cold hearth; but she will tell you that duty requires her to give, not pay, her tithe of charity. It goes, therefore, to applicants of whom she knows nothing, or to organized associations; is sometimes well and as often ill bestowed.

The quality of mercy and its substance, whether that be money, old clothes, or cold victuals, is much more apt to bless those who give than those who take, unless there be personal sympathy given with it. The poorest beggar takes mere alms with a sullen sense of injustice. If our conscientious friend, and our readers who are of her persuasion, would contrive to turn the alms given from their household into wages, and their homilies into sympathy, the coming winter would not prove so prolific in well-fed tramps and starving tradesmen.

There are other kinds of charity which are much more helpful than money-giving, and are frequently practicable by those who have least money to give. There is influence; the personal trouble required to write a letter or to make a call, in order to find pupils for the poor visiting governess, or more work for the cobbler, or a better position on the railroad for the young fellow across the way who supports his mother and sisters. There is the magazine carefully saved and forwarded to the poor teacher among the hills who cannot afford a subscription; there is the glimpse of town given to the country cousins, the fortnight at the sea-shore for the seamstress and her pale little baby. There is the invitation now and then, and the hearty welcome always, to the lads alone in the great city

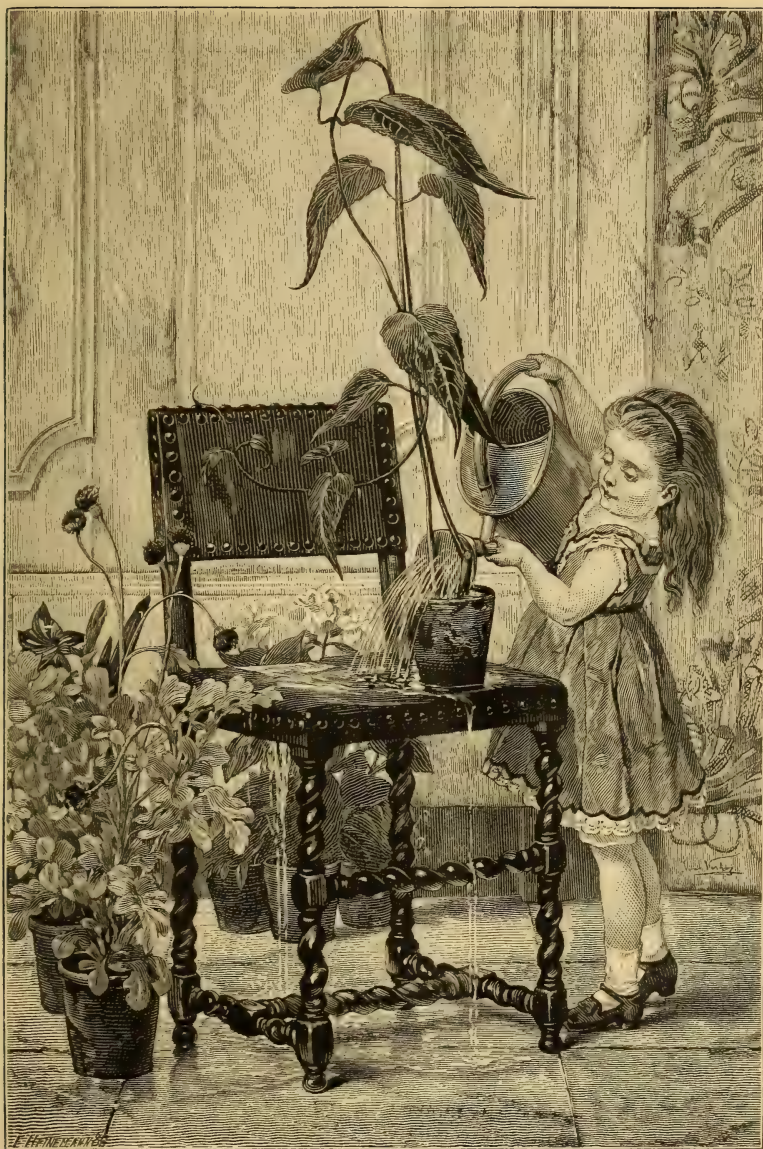
who know only our own family; in short, the giving of trouble and sympathy, not money, to those who need help. Some few women have that witch-hazel power which enables them to find out the human nature in their cook or washerwoman, as well as in the people they receive in their drawing-rooms. Such women are benefactors, though they should never be worth a dollar of ready money; and however cheap their houses or poor their table, nobody can cross their threshold without feeling that he has drawn nearer to the sun, and has been there royally warmed and fed.

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*"DE GUSTIBUS."*

WHEN Madame de Staël said that taste teaches what we should avoid, she left her definition half-finished. If taste only taught us that, we should be reduced to a state of æsthetical atrophy, or rather to that forlorn condition in which Sancho Panza found himself at the dinner table, when dish after dish disappeared before the hungry governor at the instance of his too cautious medical adviser. There is indeed a direct analogy between the physical sense and the intellectual attribute which most languages express by the same word, and it is nowhere more apparent than in the extraordinary diversity of choice which is common to both. We all have our conventional notions of good manners—of what is to us real eye-pleasure or ear-pleasure. The sources of gratification to sight and hearing are as numerous and opposite as those which are experienced by the palate itself. In the whole range of gastronomy, from the appreciation of caviare to a relish for cowheel, there is no more of epicurism, no greater variety of zest, than in the field of mental appetite. The gradations of taste in the highest sense of the word are infinite. For instance, we all know that it would be hopeless to set up in any given sphere





HELPING MOTHER.



of life a standard of æsthetics which should be followed by all who move in that sphere. The influence of education, of temperament, of association, of example, would soon be felt in a thousand different ways, and would render our definition of taste (in so far as it implies excellence of judgment) impossible.

The truth is that this faculty is dependent on, and has in a great measure to accommodate itself to, the age in which we live, the country which we inhabit, and the condition of life in which we are born. That code of good manners which it was once the fashion to call etiquette requires constant revision,—is in fact being constantly revised from time to time. How many changes have we seen in our own day, from the stately "deportment" of the Georgian era, which still lingers among old gentlemen, to the free and easy habits of their grandsons! The "swell" of 1878 differs as much from the "buck" of 1838 as the buck of that date differed from a "dandy" of the Brummel type, and Brummel himself from a "macaroni" of a previous age. The change is not always in one direction. In some matters our social by-laws have relaxed their severity; in others have become more stringent. Children are no longer expected to address their father as "sir," nor to bow to their parents on entering a room, as was once the custom. On the other hand, a boy from Eton who should now use as much license in speech, and abuse servants in such language as was common with young gentlemen a generation or so ago, would hardly be considered a gentleman at all. The rules laid down by Lord Chesterfield for the behavior of his son at table, etc., sound as obvious in the ears of a modern youth of good breeding as if he were told that he must not omit the first letter of the word "horse." School-mistresses are not still obliged to inveigh against the impropriety of eating pease with a knife. We have reached an age of refinement when such points are universally conceded; yet it must be confessed that the rising generation has contracted certain habits of dress and carriage which would have been thought slovenly half a century ago. "Until I was fifty years of age," said an old gentleman once to the writer of these lines, "I never thought of sitting in an

arm-chair unless I was unwell." Now every young bachelor sprawls upon the sofa to read or smoke.

The deference, too, which was formerly paid to the aged by their juniors has diminished so much that it promises to be fairly obliterated. In the early part of this century, boys of eighteen were still boys, who did not venture to join in the conversation of their elder relatives unless they were encouraged to do so, which was but seldom. If they expressed an opinion, it was with that sort of modesty which was expected from the Greek youth, who were accustomed to hang their heads down in the presence of their elders. In our own day, the social *toga virilis* is assumed much earlier, and a lad who is still at school will often answer and argue with Paterfamilias as if the two were on an equal footing.

It is unnecessary to discuss here the merits of the change or to consider how far this increase of familiarity — although it may diminish the respect — will often increase the love which a son bears to his father. The fact is merely mentioned as one of many causes which make it difficult to give any permanent definition of taste in its relation to good manners while good manners themselves are subject to such continual changes of fashion that the habits of a well-bred man in one century would be barely tolerated by modern society in the next. It will, perhaps, be argued by some that it is the acquaintance with, and self-accommodation to, these conventional rules which constitute good manners in any age. But this is an axiom which the moralists will not allow us to accept. Indeed, the more we attempt to associate taste with moral influence, the more perplexing seems the problem to be solved. Was any court more punctilious than that of Louis XIV.? Was not his late Majesty King George IV. known as the "first gentleman of Europe"?

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Many reasons may be assigned for the want of sympathy and cordiality which has existed between the aristocracy and middle-class life. Intellect has, with few exceptions, found its proper level in every age. But it requires intelligence of a



peculiar order—a rare combination of the best qualities of head and heart—to endow men with that degree of refinement which is necessary to fit them for a higher sphere of life than that in which they were born, and for the society of those whose superior breeding and more polished manners are due not only to education but to Nature herself.

Should these conditions, however, be fulfilled, the desire which prompts men to associate with others who, though occupying a higher social station, are more their equals in regard to intellect and manner than most men of their own standing, is natural enough. No one can be blamed for seeking that sort of company, whether among his betters or his inferiors, from which he can really derive an honest pleasure. It is the running after a mere title for the sake of self-aggrandizement and the abject truckling for worldly objects which constitute real *toadyism*. There is often as much vulgarity exhibited in a contempt, whether real or affected, for what outsiders call the *beau monde* as there is in the overtures which are made to gain its favor. One is the result of a sickly sense of dependence, the other of a rampant egotism; and both tend to what every gentleman must consider a violation of good taste. The first and most obvious test which we apply to ascertain each other's social characteristics is derived, of course, from conversation. The manner in which our ideas are expressed, although it may leave unrevealed all that pertains to moral disposition, is a ready index of taste, or rather of the extent to which we possess that amiable *wariness* of mind which we call tact, and which is in truth the very soul and essence of good breeding.

A morose nature will take especial delight in contradictions. Some people are never so well pleased as when they can gain-say what they hear, at once, and without qualification. “Is that *your* opinion? Well, *I* don't think so.” “Pardon me, *nothing* of the kind ever happened”; or, “I differ from you *completely*.” These are the expressions of a man who is charmed to be at variance with you. If he could agree with your remarks he would not be half so happy. Should you be wrong in what you have advanced, he will not gently set you

right. He must do so in his own vulgar, bullying fashion,—with such a flourish of trumpets as shall not be mistaken for anything but victory. We may place in the same ranks with such a character the vain and narrow-minded enthusiast, who looks on the whole world from his own point of view, and refuses to regard any subject but in the light by which he himself may be imperfectly illumined. He will not modify his theories one jot in discussion, whether they be theological, political, or artistic. He is absolutely right, and everybody who does not agree with him is absolutely wrong. The endless variety of condition and impulse to which the human heart and mind are subject is totally ignored by him. It never occurs to such a man that two people may hold very opposite opinions on many subjects and yet be both justified in doing so. Instead of "*suum*," he reads *meum* "*cuique*," and would have the whole world cry, Amen.

Another sort of selfishness may be observed in the monopoly of conversation which certain small wits hold to be their right. Most people will admit that, in social and convivial circles, the man who enjoys a reputation of being "amusing" frequently becomes an insufferable bore. It may not be always his own fault; but a man of this stamp is generally so spoiled by flattery, so long accustomed to look upon himself as an everlasting source of entertainment, that he not only believes everything he says must be entertaining, but that it is his incumbent duty to say as much as possible. The consequence is that his friends have to listen to a monologue of more or less interest, and find that any remark which they chance to make is only made an excuse for repartee. Of course, the same objection may be raised against any excessive talker, whatever may be the worth of his discourse. The prolonged attention which is given in a lecture-room cannot be expected in ordinary society, when everybody is looking for his turn to speak. The most loquacious persons are generally the worst listeners. Yet the art of listening—or, at least, of *seeming* interested in what others say—is one of the most important elements of polite conversation and good manners. Next to

garrulity, in order of objectionableness, stands that mysterious reserve noticeable in some characters, and of which it is impossible to say how much proceeds from natural shyness, how much from a sour and ungenial disposition, and how much from actual stupidity. It seems paradoxical to say so, but an undue diffidence not unfrequently results from a certain kind of inactive vanity. A man must think a great deal about himself before he cares what others think of him; and it is frequently the foolish notion that everything he says and does will be important enough to demand criticism, which makes a timid man cautious and silent. Moreover, it is well known that those people are most anxious to maintain their dignity who have little real dignity to maintain. Servants, for instance, are much more punctilious about the nature of their duties than those who employ them; and often, while James and John are discussing down-stairs whose place it is to answer a bell or carry a parcel, their master, had need been, would have readily undertaken the duty himself. Thus men of an insignificant presence or dull understanding frequently assume a much more lofty air in society, where they think it necessary to assert themselves, than those whose superior manners or abilities command a real respect. The former, conscious of their own deficiencies and adopting an artificial substitute, may be compared to a man on stilts, who holds his head higher than his companions, but walks uneasily, because unnaturally; while others, who are content to be as nature made them, go through the world with less pretensions, indeed, but with infinitely more comfort to themselves and all around them.

It appears that some men of this class either affect, or are really possessed by, a total apathy for everything which excites an interest in healthy minds. They have not a note of admiration in their composition. The language of praise never flows from their lips. On them the poet's finest thoughts are thrown away—the musician wastes his sweetest strains. For them the painter plies his magic art in vain. All that is fair and lovable in nature and humanity seems but a dead letter to

these cold batrachian tempers. The genial current of the soul is frozen up, and sympathy with the outside world becomes impossible. In the society of such people no cheerful intercourse takes place, and life itself can only wear a dull and leaden aspect. Is anything more irritating than the sulky indifference with which they meet the remarks of those who have the spirit and capability to appreciate and enjoy? That half-muttered assent—that dreary shrug of the shoulders—fill an earnest man with honest indignation. Truly it would seem as if an absence of all taste were more intolerable to contemplate than taste which is even wrongly directed.

Women are, as a rule, possessed of such natural shrewdness and keen perception in the affairs of ordinary life, that any deficiency of moral taste in them proceeds from bad discipline of the heart rather than from want of tact. They are said to be good actors in what may be called the by-play of life's drama; and so, undoubtedly, they are, when they have an end in view, and especially when desirous to please. But if no such object exist, envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness rise to the lips of an ill-tempered woman as surely as bubbles to the surface of a troubled stream. Who has not noticed the knitted brow, the scornfully curled lip, the flushed cheek, the bridled chin, and silly sneers of petty rivalry and peevish displeasure which mar sometimes the fairest faces? A girl who has been injudiciously brought up, who has been petted and spoiled by her relations, whom no one has dared to contradict, and who has been accustomed to receive the homage of her little circle, bids fair to be less liked in general society than many with half her good looks and accomplishments. The Petruchio who has the taming of such a Katharine is not, indeed, to be envied. It requires no little courage and judgment on his part to inform his wife that the world will not be prepared to render her that deference which she was accustomed to exact at home. Such a woman, consumed by endless jealousies, is always ready to depreciate those qualities of her own sex which she does not herself possess, and, instead of paying honest tribute to the excellence of characters which do



not accord with her own, finds, like Pope's Atossa, a sort of malicious pleasure in disparagement.

“ Who with herself, or others, from her birth  
Finds all her life one warfare upon earth :  
Shines in exposing knaves, and painting fools,  
Yet is, whate'er she hates and ridicules :  
No thought advances, but her eddy brain  
Whisks it about, and down it goes again.”

If moral taste is the natural consequence of good breeding and an amiable disposition, it is evident that it must be wanting in such a character.

On the other hand, what better example of kindly forethought and subtle delicacy can be found than in the bearing and conversation of an amiable English gentlewoman ? Honest without being blunt ; able to please without resorting to the sickly wiles of coquetry ; gentle and refined in all she says and does ; ever ready to defend instead of to malign ; she is literally incapable of giving offense to any whose good opinion is worth retaining, and she may, indeed, be considered a perfect model of that precious quality which unites the wisdom of the world with true benevolence of heart.

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### *PERSONAL ECONOMIES.*

IN this country, we naturally go to New England, and, alas ! to an earlier time, for examples of personal economy and thrift. Almost any New-Englander can recall a country minister who, on his little yearly salary of three or four hundred dollars, managed, by the help of his wife, to live respectably and comfortably, educate a large family for self-support and social usefulness, and lay up something every year against the rainy day which comes in all men's lives. We have wondered

how it was done, but we know it was done, and that he died at last the possessor of a nice little property. New England has been noted for its hard soil and its hard conditions generally, yet there is no other spot on the face of the earth that contains so much human comfort to the square mile. Every man born on New England soil tries and expects to better his condition during his life, and he goes to work at the beginning with this end definitely in view. The rich men of New England are men who began their prosperity with humble savings. Whatever their income was, they did not use it all. Twenty-five or fifty dollars a year was considered quite worth saving and laying by. These small sums, placed at interest, accumulated slowly but surely, until the day came at last when it was capital, to be invested in business with larger profits. A fortune acquired in this way was cohesive, strong, and permanent.

We are quite aware that something of grace and loveliness was lost in the habit of these small economies. Men grew small quite too often, and pinched and stingy, by the influence of the habit of penny savings. This has been brought against New England as a reproach, but New England has replied, with truthfulness and pride, that no people of the country or of the world have been more benevolent than her own economical children. She points to the vast sums she has expended on Christian missions, and to the great public charities whose monuments crown her hill-tops, and shows that at the call of Christianity and humanity her purse, filled with such painstaking and self-denial, flies open and empties itself to fill the measure of the public need. At any rate, we know that there is not a State in all the West that has not gone to New England for the money to build her towns and her railroads, and that if she has ever been laggard in her hospitalities, such as she has practiced have been at her own expense, and not at that of her creditors. New England is rich—and this, after all, is what we are trying to say—notwithstanding a hard soil and an inhospitable climate. Circumstances were against her from the beginning, and economy was what enabled her to conquer circumstances, and to lift herself to the commanding position of

wealth and influence which she holds to-day. The men who had an income of three hundred dollars a year, at the beginning lived on two hundred dollars. The men who had an income of five hundred dollars lived on three hundred dollars. Those whose income reached one thousand dollars lived on half of that sum, and so on. They practiced self-denial. They had no great opportunities for making money, and knew that wealth could only come to them through saving money. The old farmer who, when asked what the secret of his wealth was, replied, "When I got a cent I kep' it," told the whole story of New England thrift and comfort. Now, if we look around us here in the city of New York, we shall, in the light of this New England example, learn why it is that so many men and women drop into pauperism with such fearful rapidity on the first stoppage of income. We know very few men of fixed incomes who do not live up to the limit of these incomes, whatever it may happen to be. A man who this year has a salary of two thousand dollars uses it all, and when it goes up to three or four thousand dollars he uses it all in the same way. It seems to make no difference how much he receives—the style and cost of living expand immediately so as to absorb all that comes. Those who have no fixed income, and are engaged in trade, adopt the style of the prosperous men around them, and strain every effort to bring up their income to meet the requirements of that style. Every family, instead of endeavoring to see how small they can make their expenses, endeavor to see how large they can make them, or how large their income will permit them to be. The fixed purpose to save something out of every year's income, and so to graduate expenses that something shall be saved—the policy of rigid self-denial for the purpose of accumulating property, even though it be slowly, does not apparently exist in this community. So, when the bread-winner is disabled, or dies, his family drops into abject and utterly helpless poverty in a day, and all life is embittered thenceforward, simply because no self-denial had been practiced while the worker lived, or was able to work. The man of small or modest income looks around him, and sees

many who are rich and who are not obliged to think of every penny they spend. He regards himself as their social equal, and wonders why it should be necessary for him to be so pinched in his spendings and so plain in his surroundings. He does not consider how much and exactly what, the wealth which moves his envy has cost. He may be sure that somewhere, at the foundation of all the wealth he sees, there was once a man who practiced rigid self-denial, and studiously lived within his income, and saved money although his income was small. All fortunes have their foundations laid in economy. The man who holds the money to-day may have inherited it through the accident of birth, but it cost his father or his grandfather years—perhaps a life-time—of economy and self-denial. There is no royal road to wealth any more than there is to learning. It costs hard work, and the relinquishment of many pleasures, and most men may have it who will pay its price. If they are not willing to do this, why, they must not complain of their lot when their day of adversity comes; and they ought to have the grace to make themselves just as little of a nuisance as possible to those who have secured a competence and paid the honest price for it.

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### *HOW TO KEEP HOUSE ON A SMALL SALARY.*

AFTER many years of married life passed in comparative affluence, reverses came, and my husband was obliged to accept a situation in a large city, with a small salary of eight hundred dollars per year. I felt that this could suffice for our maintenance only by the exercise of the strictest economy. A little over fifteen dollars a week! How many times I divided that eight hundred dollars by fifty-two, and tried to make it come out a little more! Still I determined to solve the problem of the day—namely, whether one could keep



house on a small salary, or whether boarding-house life was a necessity, as so many clerks' wives assert. We had neither of us been accustomed to economizing, and I felt it was but just, if my husband worked hard for his salary, that I should perform the labor of making it go as far as possible.

Thirty replies were received to our advertisement for two unfurnished rooms, without board. Looking them over carefully, I selected half a dozen which came within our means, and started on an exploring expedition. In a pleasant house and neighborhood I found a lady willing to rent two adjoining rooms, with closets and water conveniences, for the modest sum of twelve dollars per month. In one room there were two deep south windows, where I could keep a few plants in the winter. I consulted my husband, and with his approval engaged the rooms.

We had one hundred and seventy-five dollars, ready money. With this we bought bright but inexpensive carpets, a parlor cook-stove, an oiled black-walnut set of furniture, a table, a student lamp, a few dishes, and some coal. With the few pictures, a rack of books, and some ornaments in our possession, we decked the rooms tastefully, and commenced the serious business of keeping house on eight hundred dollars per year. We determined from the first that we would not have any accounts, but would pay cash for everything, and when we could not afford an article, do without it. After paying rent and washerwoman we had fifty dollars per month for other expenses. Twenty dollars of this furnished us a plentiful supply of food and paid car fare. I learned to love my work. Strength came with each day's labor, and renewed health repaid each effort put forth to make my little home pleasant and restful to my husband. And how we did enjoy that little home!

When the stormy nights came, we drew our curtains, shutting out the world, with a bright fire, and the soft glow of our reading-lamp upon the crimson cloth, reading a magazine or evening paper (in which we were able to indulge), with a "God pity the poor this dreadful night!" forgetting in our

cozy and comfortable home how many there were in the great city who would call us poor. We always kept within my husband's salary, wearing plain but good and respectable clothing, and eating simple but substantial food. And now, as circumstances have been improving with us, and we are living in a house all our own, with servants, and thousands instead of hundreds a year, we look back to the year spent in our simple, frugal little home, and know that it will always be the happiest portion of our lives.

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### *CITY SHOPPING FOR COUNTRY FRIENDS.*

WHAT is so dear to the heart of an American woman as a bargain? It would really seem that to make a very little money buy a great deal, without reference to any other expenditure involved, were now the "chief end" of woman. Listen to the bits of talk that float into your ear as you stem the tide of Broadway, or the main shopping street of any of our large cities. The burden of the conversation is always bargains, bargains, bargains. "What was the price of this?" or, "Where can this be bought cheapest?" or, again, "Is n't that lovely! I wonder how much it costs?"

This is only one of the petty ramifications of the commercial spirit, which, in excess, will eat the heart out of any nation, or of any nature. The spirit of trade, the dominant purpose of giving the least and getting the most, is not limited to our great business exchanges. It is all abroad, poisoning our spiritual atmosphere, tainting our social relations, weakening the springs of noble and disinterested action, and breeding a host of mean and petty vices in the individual. So far from being confined to our great cities, it appears to possess the homeopathic quality of gaining potency by subdivision, of growing stronger as it deals with more minute quantities.

Many country people, who take the city papers, fairly gloat over the enticing advertisements—with prices attached—of “great sacrifices,” “unexampled opportunity for buyers,” etc., etc., etc. They seize the bait and walk into the trap—oh, wise country people!—*by proxy*. And the poor proxy is called upon to make good the unprincipled promises of the tradesman.

To add to the trouble occasioned by these vicious advertisements, country people have the most erroneous ideas in regard to city life. Every woman living in the country or in a small village knows by painful experience the burden of her own cares, and the exactions of her own duties. She has usually no conception of other cares as heavy, and other duties as absorbing, as her own, though entirely different from them. She is apt to fancy her city neighbor living a life of luxurious idleness, spending her time in a round of pleasures; and to feel it rather a virtue to supply a motive to this aimless life. She does not take the trouble to inform herself about the state of the case before she passes judgment and acts upon it. She does not try to understand, or care to remember, that city life, while it enjoys certain immunities, entails peculiar duties and suffers myriads of interruptions; and that time, which is such a cheap commodity in the country, comes to be very precious in the hurry and bustle of city life.

There are cases where money to buy the bare necessities of life is hard to get, and when the only thing left to a woman is to make it do its very utmost. But such cases lie entirely outside the question at issue. I am not talking of the necessities of life, but of its luxuries. Possibly, a woman has the right to spend days and days in laborious bargain-seeking, if her time and energy are worth absolutely nothing to herself, or to anybody else. But when it comes to weighing against a few of our petty dollars other people's time, and strength, and comfort, the aspect of the matter changes. Nothing but necessity will redeem this from being a gross imposition.

I am living in a small country town. I want a new dress. I have something which I *could* wear, to be sure, but I want

something new. It must be very pretty, suitable for the street, but not too plain or somber for a quiet dinner-party. It must be stylish, of course, and it must be cheap. I bethink me of some city friend, and feel sure she "wont mind." She goes out every day, and she can easily find just what I want in one of her afternoon strolls. I write, giving her the vaguest possible directions, only it must not be this, or that, or the other, and it must suit my style and complexion. While she is about it, will she not get me a pair of gloves to match, and a simple hat, with materials for trimming it, and any little new and pretty things for the neck. What a caressing tenderness a woman feels for her neck! I generously leave the decision, the responsibility, everything, to her taste. No, not quite everything: I limit her in the price; about that I am very particular. Perhaps I send her a check to cover expenses with the order, but probably I say to myself, "No, she will not mind. I will send it to her when I know the exact amount. City people always have such sums about them."

But the question has another aspect, of which this innocent *I* is entirely unconscious, and which should be made clear.

The city friend accepts the commission, the first time cheerfully; after repeated experience, with a weary sigh. She spends days walking the muddy or dusty streets, trying to make the very indefinite directions about beauty, and style, and suitability harmonize with the extremely definite ones in regard to price. She finally concludes her task. The dress, with trimmings and cut-paper pattern, the hat with its numerous belongings, the gloves, the neck-wear, etc., are bought, and the results of all this matching, and selecting, and thinking, of these weary walks and squandered hours, come home in a number of paper parcels. But the end is not yet. A suitable box must be found; the house is ransacked in vain. Another trip—for who ever seriously and reasonably thought of the box till the last moment?—and a box is bought (an item not entered in the account). One whole morning is then devoted to packing it, nailing it up, marking it, and dispatching it to its destination.



After all this labor, my box arrives. I open it and pounce upon the small paper containing the account. My heart sinks!—I did not think it would be so much. I explore the hidden mysteries. Whatever my search may reveal, it is certain to be different from the vague, angelic raiment which has been floating on the confines of my fancy. I write, expressing my thanks, and perhaps, if I have not done it before, I send my check. But down in the bottom of my heart there is a reserve of dissatisfaction, which sounds out perfectly distinct above all my wordy thanks.

And my friend—does she feel as cordially my friend as ever when she has seen how mean, how inconsiderate, how ungrateful I am willing to be to save a few dollars of my money? There are agencies for the purchase of dresses and bonnets, of gloves and laces, where people are glad to do the work, and do it well, for a commission. Samples, catalogues, fashion-books, are always attainable, by which selections quite as good and satisfactory can be made as by most friends at a distance. This mode has its disadvantages: it costs more, and one has to pay for the time used, instead of taking it from others.

A singular immunity from this sort of imposition, due to superior good fortune, wisdom, or ill-temper (I will not inquire too curiously which), makes it possible for the writer to speak impersonally, and therefore strongly, upon this growing vice among American women. It has been well and wisely said that quite as much of the evil in this world springs from women's vanity as from men's wickedness. And all other forms of this vanity pale before the growing and absorbing passion for dress. How many of the noble, and sweet, and gracious things of life are yet to scorch up and shrivel in this baleful fire, in which so much has already perished?

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*FROM COUNTRY TO CITY.*

IT is presumable and probable that there arrives in New York City every day a considerable number of letters from the country, making inquiry concerning what it is possible for a country man to do here in the way of business, and asking advice upon the question of his removal to the city. Every citizen of New York, with country associations, is applied to for information and counsel with regard to such a "change of base," and the matter seems worth the few words a careful and candid observer may have to say about it.

It is well, at the beginning, to look at the reasons which move people to a desire to make a change. The first, perhaps, are pecuniary reasons. A man living in a country town looks about him, and can discover no means for making money in a large way. Everything seems petty. The business of the place is small, and its possibilities of development seem very limited. A few rich men hold everything in their hands, and a young man, with nothing for capital but his youth and health and hope and ability, feels cramped — feels, in fact, that he has no chance. His savings must be small and slow, and a life-time is necessary to lift him to a point where money will give him power. It seems to him that if he could get into the midst of the great business of the world, he could find his chance for a quicker and broader development of wealth; and in this connection, or with this fancy, he writes a letter to his city acquaintance, asking for his advice upon the matter.

Another is smitten by a sense of the dryness and pettiness of the social life he is surrounded by in the country, and the small opportunities he has for personal satisfaction and development. To be able to live among picture-galleries and in the vicinity of great, open libraries; to have the finest theaters and the most attractive concert-halls at one's door; to be where the best minds reveal themselves in pulpit and on platform in public speech; where competent masters stand ready to teach every science and every art; to live among those whose knowledge of the world is a source of constant satisfac-

tion and culture; to be at the very fountain-head of the intellectual, social, and politico-economical influences that sweep over the country; to feel the stimulus of competition and example, and to live in an atmosphere charged with vital activity,—all this seems such a contrast to the pettiness and thinness and insignificance of village life, that the young man, realizing it, sits down and writes to his city friend, inquiring what chance there would be in the city for him. The country seems small to him; the city, large. He feels the gossip that flutters about his ears to be disgusting and degrading; and chafes under the bondage imposed by his neighbors through their surveillance of, and criticism upon, all his actions. He wants more liberty, and for some reasons would really like to be where he is less known and less cared for.

There is still another class of country people who long for a city life, and whose aspirations and dispositions are very much less definite and reasonable than those to whom we have alluded. They are not so particular about business or about wealth, nor do they care definitely about superior social privileges, or about the culture more readily secured in the city than in the country. They are simply gregarious. They like a crowd, even if they have to live in a "mess." They are so fond of living in a multitude that they are willing to sacrifice many comforts to do it. Once in the city, no poverty will induce them to leave it. They have no interest in life outside of the city. These usually get to the city in some way without writing letters of inquiry.

Now, it has probably surprised most inquirers to receive uniformly discouraging answers to their questions. For, indeed, no man knows the trials of city life but those who have left quiet homes in the country and tried it. The great trial that every man from the country experiences on coming to the city, even supposing he has found employment, or gone into business, relates to his home. His thousand dollars a year, which in the country would give him a snug little house and comfortable provision, would get him in the city only a small room in a boarding-house. The two thousand dollars that

would give him something more than a comfortable home in the country, would give him in the city only a better boarding-house. The three thousand that would give him in the country a fair establishment, with horses for his convenience and amusement, would in the city only give him a small "flat" in a crowded apartment-house; and the five thousand in the country that would give him the surroundings of a nabob, would only pay the rent of a house on Fifth Avenue. The country rich man can live splendidly on from five to ten thousand dollars a year, while the city rich man spends from twenty to fifty thousand dollars a year. City incomes look large, but relatively to city expenses they are no larger than the country incomes. The man who lives in the city has experienced the remediless drain upon his purse of the life which he lives, and feels that the risk which a business man runs of coming into unknown circumstances is very great. He feels that unless his country friend knows just how he is going to meet that drain, he will be safer where he is. City life is naturally merciless. It has to take care of itself, and has all it can do to meet its own wants. If a man from the country comes into it, and fails, he must go to the wall. Friends cannot save him. A city looks coolly upon a catastrophe of this kind, for it is an every-day affair, and the victim knows perfectly well that he can neither help himself nor get anybody else to help him. So the city friend, knowing the risks and the needs of city life, dreads to see any country friend undertake them. Then, too, the faithful records of city life show that the chances are largely against financial success in it.

The man of society who is attracted from the country to the city usually fails to calculate his own insignificance when he encounters numbers. The man of social consideration in the country needs only to go to the city to find so many heads above his own that he is counted of no value whatever. "Who is he?" "What is he?" and "What has he done?" are questions that need to be satisfactorily answered before he will be accepted, and even then he will need to become a positive force of some sort in society to maintain his position. City



society is full of bright and positive men and women, and the man and woman from the country bring none of their old neighborhood prestige with them to help them through.

To sum up what the city man really feels in regard to the coming of his country acquaintances to the city, it would be not far from this,—viz. :

*First.* The chances for wealth are as great, practically, in the country as in the city, and the expenses of living and the risks of disaster much less.

*Second.* The competitions of city life and the struggles to get hold of business and salaried work are fearful. No man should come to the city unless he knows what he is going to do, or has money enough in his hands to take care of himself until he gets a living position or becomes satisfied that he cannot get one. Even to-day, with the evidences of renewed prosperity all around us, there are probably ten applications on file for every desirable place, and no man living here could help a friend to a place, unless he could create one.

*Third.* That the social privileges of the city may be greater, while the opportunities of social distinction and the probabilities of social consideration are much less than they are in the country.

*Fourth.* That in many respects there is nothing in the city that can compensate for the pure pleasures of country scenery and country life and neighborhood associations.

*Fifth.* That a city man's dream of the future, particularly if he ever lived in the country, is always of the country and the soil. He longs to leave the noise and fight all behind him, and go back to his country home to enjoy the money he may have won.

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### HEROISM BEGINS AT HOME.

WE often hear people speak of a heroic action with a certain surprise at its performance not altogether complimentary to the performer. "He forgot himself," they say; "he surpassed himself"; "he was carried away by a noble

impulse." This is not true. A man does not forget himself in emergency—he asserts himself, rather; that which is deepest and strongest in him breaks suddenly through the exterior of calm conventionalities, and for a moment you know his real value; you get a measure of his capacity. But this capacity is not created, as some say, by the emergency. No man can be carried farther by the demands of the moment than his common aspirations and sober purposes have prepared him to go. A brave man does not rise to the occasion; the occasion rises to him. His bravery was in him before—dormant, but alive; unknown perhaps to himself; for we are not apt to appreciate the slow, sure gains of convictions of duty steadily followed; of patient continuance in well-doing; of daily victories over self, until a sudden draft upon us shows what they have amounted to. We are like water-springs, whose pent-up streams rise with opportunity to the level of the fountain-head, and no higher. A man selfish at heart and in ordinary behavior cannot be unselfish when unselfishness would be rewarded openly. If he will not be unselfish when he ought, he cannot be so when he would. Is it not a question practical for every home: What sort of characters are we, parents and children, forming by everyday habits of thought and action? Emergencies are but experimental tests of our strength or weakness; and we shall bear them, not according to sudden resolve, but according to the quality of our daily living. The oak does not encounter more than two or three whirlwinds during its long life; but it lays up its solid strength through years of peace and sunshine, and when its hour of trial comes it is ready. The children of to-day, protected, cared for now, must soon begin to fight their own battles with the world; nay, more—must *make* the world in which they live. The future America lies in these little hands. They are

“ Brought forth and reared in hours  
Of change, alarm, surprise.”

What shall we do to make them sufficient for the times upon which they have fallen?

*"YOU OUGHT TO KNOW."*

ALMOST all of us can remember the friend who upon various occasions has said to us: "Now you must not be offended if I say something to you that I really feel it my duty to speak about." The most proper thing to do, as a rule in such a case, is to knock the man down—if he is not too large;—for after he has finished there can be no doubt but that you will want to do so, and propriety, or conscience, may then prevent. There is another form of friendship quite as common, especially among women, that leads one to tell the other some neat little gossip about herself or family, not that the relator believes a word of it, but because the victim "ought to know." These customs among our friends are so common that we accept them as matters of course, and even when we are most exasperated by them, we know we shall forgive them in time. A sad experience teaches us that much.

The friends who compliment sincerely, or who repeat frankly the pleasant things they hear of us, are so rare that we seldom meet them. Yet if friendship is looked upon abstractly, if it is regarded as a feeling founded on mutual regard and congenial pursuits, it is a little remarkable that we are so reticent in our expression of appreciation and regard.

Friendship means help and support as well as mere liking, and he has been a poor friend to us if, in the hour of need and loneliness, we do not involuntarily recall some word of comfort, some expression of confidence, that makes us stronger to bear the present trial.

It is not enough to love; we must let the loved ones know we love them!

There are but few persons leading earnest lives who do not feel that they fail to thoroughly realize even the most limited of their aims, and if they are unhappy enough to be sensitive as well as earnest, it cannot be prophesied how much real good a hearty word may do them in times of mental trouble. Then it is that a true friend will think it well to tell them something encouraging, something strengthening and reviving, that they "ought to know."

*TALKING OF OUR FRIENDS.*

A MAN would get a very false notion of his standing among his friends and acquaintances if it were possible—as many would like to have it possible—to know what is said of him behind his back. One day he would go about in a glow of self-esteem; and the next he would be bowed under a miserable sense of misapprehension and distrust. It would be impossible for him to put this and that together and “strike an average.” The fact is, there is a strange human tendency to take the present friend into present confidence. With strong natures this tendency proves often a stumbling-block—with weak natures it amounts to fickleness. It is a proof, no doubt, of the universal brotherhood; but one has to watch lest, in an unguarded moment, it lead him into ever so slight disloyalty to the absent.

It is a nice question—how much liberty may we allow ourselves in talking of our absent friends? It is very clear that we may discuss their virtues as much as we choose. That is a holy exercise. But their failings! I think it may be considered a sign that we have gone too far when we sweep away all our fault-finding, our nice balancing of qualities and analysis of character, in a sudden storm of adulation.

I suppose the distinction between the different grades of friendship should be made clear. Let us say—acquaintances, friends, intimates. Most persons can easily place the people whom they know under these three heads. Now it does seem not only natural but desirable that there should be free, though always loyal and kindly, discussion as to the antecedents, the surroundings, the prejudices, the whims, the characters of those with whom we are thrown in contact, and who come under the first two heads. We may thus learn to bear more easily with their eccentricities, to appreciate their good points, to judge how far we should allow their views to affect ours. As for the third class—go to! is not love its own law?



*SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN LOVE.*

IT is worth while now and then to have what is called the truth told you about yourself. There are times when such truth-telling is of great and immediate service. But I have noticed that persons who plume themselves upon speaking the truth to their neighbors are persons who really have no special devotion to truth, but who have, on the other hand, a passion for making people uncomfortable. They do not love their neighbors; they hate them, or are indifferent to them. With them so-called truth-telling is merely a form of self-indulgence.

How would it do, the next time the village truth-teller comes around, for you to tell the truth to him?

"Kind friend, I thank thee for telling me that my daughter's manners are rude, and that my uncle, the parson, should be spoken to about his method of public prayer, and that my Sunday-best-go-to-meeting stove-pipe hat is two seasons behind the times; but let me reciprocate thy kindness by informing thee that thou art a selfish old gossip, without enough brains to perceive the whole truth about any situation, but only a silly half-truth, or a miserable distorted-truth, which, from the best of motives, I advise thee to keep to thyself."

*TABLE-TALK.*

THERE are, Heaven be praised! very few professional talkers in America. The popular verdict has pronounced your "fine conversationalist" a bore. The days of the elaborate story-teller are over. People who have elaborate stories or opinions know their market value, and usually put them into print at so much per page. We all declare that we are in too much of a hurry to write long letters or to study our words. We may preach, paint, or reform the world; but our intercourse with our friends must be short, ready, compact,

made up of necessary question and answer. There is, in fact, a little danger that we shall ignore the importance of conversation altogether, especially at home. "At a man's own table," we all say, "he surely can be at ease and slipshod in his talk."

Now, there is absolutely no limit to the slipshod quality of table-talk in most families. Decent people, of course, are careful about the children's grammar, and guard their morals against injury even at breakfast. But there precaution usually ends. Mother and father conduct the training of the young folks by certain formal means, family worship, Sunday observances, rule upon rule, precept upon precept, and then inculcate, by their manner and words at the table, faults of character, less tangible, but quite as fatal, as those against which they have preached.

The first and most common mistake is that the children hear too much of themselves. Especially is this the case in families where the parents are conscientious, and have made their children the first object in life. They have a well-considered theory to meet every point in Joe's and Jenny's career, from teething to matrimony. The young folks learn to consider themselves the sole objects of the labor, thought, and prayer of the little world in which they live. Their faults and virtues are incessantly discussed in their presence. The chance visitor is regaled with an account of Joe's crooked teeth or Jenny's musical ear. No matter how eminent for wit, learning, or piety the guest at the table may be, his conversation is not held to be half so important by father or mother as the silly, pert twaddle of the young folks, and the young folks know it. The result is inevitable. The children, if they do not become selfish, are made, at least, intolerably self-conscious; school and college do not diminish their conceit, and it needs years of hard friction with the world, and a wrench of disappointment at its neglect, as bitter as death, to give the man and woman a proper estimate of themselves, and to make useful and rational people of them.

Another mistake in ordinary family talk is that it centers exclusively on home interests and on people, instead of ideas

or things. Month after month, year after year, the same unceasing dribble goes on over Biddy's short-comings, the crop of potatoes, Squire Potts's neuralgia, Sally Hall's flirtation ; and this not among vulgar, ignorant people, but men and women of culture and refinement. It would be a good rule to establish at every table that people should seldom be mentioned, and dress never. No education can enlarge the minds of children constantly cramped by such petty bounds. The only remedy for such belittling thoughts is for parents to test their own position in the world, and to find out how insignificant a place they and their village and their State hold in it. They would begin to learn that life was given them for nobler ends than unending chatter over a new gown or the gossip of their set.

Another glaring mistake is, that many Christian people who are zealous for the conversion of the world, and who besiege the Almighty with prayers for their children, sit down at the table daily with gloomy faces and morbid talk, or snap, grumble, and scold servants, children, or each other. Children and servants are sharp-eyed : they put little faith in a religion which is not stronger than dyspepsia or nervous debility. In short, it is by this petty table-talk that all religion, morals, and rules are tested by the young. It is worth while for every parent to consider what kind of teaching is given at every meal.

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### *UNCHARITABLE CRITICISM.*

I WAS once talking with a very interesting person, and one with whom it is always a pleasure to talk. After leaving him I found myself feeling like a pickpocket,—for I remembered that I had been led into criticising an acquaintance of ours in a free and uncharitable manner. In thinking over the incident, it became clear to me that this was the way it hap-

pened: The person with whom I was conversing was a man himself given to free and uncharitable criticism of others—to the kind of insinuation which puts himself in the right, and all others in the wrong. He was also a person of such knowledge, and such intellectual force and insight, that no one could escape the desire to win his good opinion. So, before I knew it, I was forced into the contemptible business of asserting myself and depreciating others.

I sometimes think, when I look around upon the community and see the selfishness and lack of consideration that make so much trouble and misery; when I see the absence of conscience and the want of generosity in public and in private life; when I see young married people—nourished upon a diluted “culture,” and trained in a sentimental and bogus spirituality—breaking up their homes and forgetting their solemn vows of companionship and protection as soon as they discover that life is a more serious business than they had imagined;—when I see all this, I sometimes think that after two or three centuries more of such criticism and despal as Christianity is getting nowadays, the world will awake to the fact that there is something in it, after all.

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### *LISTEN!*

DO you wish to do something toward making your home happy? Do you desire that your brothers and sisters should be glad to have you with them, and that you should always be a welcome companion to your parents or your children? Do you want to have your society coveted everywhere, and to feel, the while, that you are doing good as well as giving pleasure? Would you like to help people to think well, and to have them save their best thoughts for you?



Would it please you to get all the good you can out of the people you know?

If so, learn to listen.

But first learn what listening is—for it is not merely the exercise of the sense of hearing. The stupidest of us all can keep ears open and mouth shut. To listen properly means to make other people talk properly. That is a social definition, if it is not a Websterian one. The good listener is a cause of talking in others, and by a proper exercise of this valuable and too scarce gift, makes the diffident say what they think, and the verbose think what they say. For the greatest talkers are careful when they find they have a good listener. They know that they may not often be so fortunate, and they talk their best. The adept in listening may sometimes hear more prosing than he likes, but if he be skillful this will not often happen. When it is impossible to get anything interesting or useful out of a man, he need be listened to no longer. Every one of sense will agree to that. But it is astonishing how many good things some very unpromising persons will say if they be properly and conscientiously listened to.

To be sure, it is very hard for some persons to listen. They have a gift for talking, and they like to exercise it. But these are the very persons who should do a great deal of listening. They know what a luxury it is to talk, and they should give their families and friends a chance to learn the art. Besides, like farmers, they will often find much advantage in a rotation of crops. A season of listening is often a most excellent preparative for a season of talk.

It is often supposed that if a man has a good thing to say, he will say it, but this is not necessarily the case. Very often he never says it, because no one will give him a chance. He don't want to waste his speech on fools, and the smart folks want him to content himself with hearing what they have to say. This happens—not in connection with very good things, perhaps, but with things that might lead to very good things—every day and every hour, in thousands of families, all over the land—to say nothing of society.

There are those who so seldom have a chance to speak to interested ears, that they gradually withdraw themselves into themselves, where, not generally finding much, they intellectually pine away.

To be sure, we should not fail to become good talkers, if we can; but, do what we may, we can only make one talker of ourselves, whereas, by proper listening, we may make a dozen talkers of other people.

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### *SOMETHING WORTH THINKING OF.*

HOW would it do for us to say to-day some of the things we intend to say in our last illness? Honor bright! are you not saving up several fine, generous, pathetic little speeches to be made on your death-bed; all the scenery set, full company on the stage, grand final tableau? Ten chances to one you 'll forget them then; or have a rattling in your throat that will shake them out of shape. Forth with them now like men—"My dear boy, you have been the light and comfort of my life"; "My dear girl, without you I would have been nothing in this world."

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### *VILLAGE SOCIETY IN WINTER.*

WITH the closing of the doors and lighting of the fires for winter, accidentals, sociables, sewing and reading clubs begin in all inland towns and villages. We have a word or two to say concerning these stated little assemblies which constitute society in thousands of our towns.

*First.* As to sewing-clubs; the work should be carefully restricted to such embroidery, etc., as cannot be done by women who earn their living by their needle. The justice of this ought to be at once apparent; but it is, as a rule, overlooked. We have known the plain sewing taken from the seamstresses of a village, and given to church clubs, for a winter; the consequence of which was, hungry women asking parish help, and a stained-glass window back of the pulpit.

*Secondly.* In reading-clubs, let the time for each reader be limited by inflexible rule. If this is not done, there will be found in every such club at least one dogmatic, selfish reader, who will force his author and his voice upon the club until, in disgust and weariness, the members fall off and the experiment fails.

*Thirdly.* If we may trench upon a most delicate topic, we would suggest that in merely social combinations, for the purpose of music, dancing, or conversation, the old caste lines of the town be disregarded. There is no despotism more narrow or cruel than the aristocracy of a village. New blood and new ideas would generally revivify it; outside of the so-called "good society" of such a place which has been fenced in for two or three generations, is frequently found the larger proportion of intelligence, culture, and breadth of thought.

*Fourthly.* The great want experienced by cultured men and women in a small town is of books, periodicals, etc., which, individually, they are not able to buy. There are very few circulating libraries in American towns of a population less than ten thousand. This want can be obviated, in a measure, by a friendly combination between certain families or individuals, in which each contributes a given number of books to a common stock; these books are loaned to the members in turn.

A more formal and much better way is the formation of a book-club, such as were common in England before the establishment of Mudie, in which each member pays at the beginning a certain sum, with which as many books are purchased as there are members, each one choosing a book; these pass in

regular rotation from hand to hand, remaining a fortnight with each reader; twenty books may thus be read for the cost of one. When the books have passed around the circle, they are sold to members for the benefit of the club. Fines for detention and abuse of books also keep up the funds. No officer is required in this association but a treasurer. Another advantage in the plan is that books can be bought by the quantity at lower rates than singly. The same rule applies to subscriptions for magazines, newspapers, etc.

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### *CHRISTMAS GIFTS.*

THE happy Christmas time opens a way of approach to the sternest of the self-respecting poor. The barrel of flour, ham, or turkey, the comfortable dress for the mother, or flannel outfit for the baby, can be sent under cover of a Christmas greeting, and welcomed, which on another day would appear an insult. Let us spend what money we have to spare in this practical, helpful direction, and give to our well-to-do friends and intimates something better than money—the careful thought and consideration which will discover a trifling gift especially suitable to each. The usual practice in choosing Christmas gifts is to start out with a full porte-monnaie and come home with it empty, having scoured a dozen book and print and curio shops meantime, to “find enough pretty things to go round.” The gift sent to one friend might have been offered with equal propriety to a hundred others. Now everybody (worth remembering at all on Christmas day) has a fancy, or whim, or association, which a trifle will recall and gratify. Now that we have so little money, let us set our brains to work to remember these whims or hobbies, and to find the suggestive trifles, and our word for it, we will startle our friends with a more real pleasure than if we had sent them the costliest unmeaning gift. There must be a nice discrimination, too, in assorting these trifles. There are certain folk



whom we know to be sorely in need of articles for the wardrobe, and to whom we must therefore give utterly useless follies, because they know that we know it; and there are other and better folk in like condition, who will receive a collar or a pair of gloves with as hearty and sincere feeling as though the offering were a strain of Christmas music. There is one cousin whose gift must smell of the shops and the dollars paid for it, and another who, if we sent her our worn copy of George Herbert, or the little broken vase which has stood for years on the study table, would receive them with wet eyes, and find them fragrant with old memories. With genuine people of any sort the gift is valued, of course, in proportion to the personal care and thought bestowed upon it. The bit of embroidery by dear unskillful fingers assumes a worth which no priceless point ever knew. Some women's fingers are not to be trained to hold the needle or pencil; for them the scroll-saw offers inexhaustible resources. There is literally no end to the pretty trifles which can be fashioned with one of these magic helps. One of the most successful Christmas gifts we ever saw was a quire of thick white note-paper, on the corner of which was a monogram of tiniest ferns or autumn leaves. "She thought of me every day for months," cried the happy recipient, with tears in her eyes. Another was a little cheap photograph of a room dear to the giver and to him to whom it was sent. In short, it is not money which we want for our gifts, but the tender feeling and fine tact in its expression, which no rules or hints can supply if nature has denied it.

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### *IN MEMORIAM—A CHRISTMAS SUGGESTION.*

THE custom of giving memorial windows to churches has become common among us of late years, and there is something true and beautiful in the idea which will prevent its falling into disuse. There is such a hungry feeling in all our hearts to keep a place in the world for our dead—to make

them in some degree real and dear to others as they are to us. It seems a natural and right thing to do to blend their shadowy memories with the softened light that comes to us on God's day, or with the faces of saint and martyr rising before us as we kneel in prayer. The feeling is so strong and so universal that any extravagance in its expression is readily forgiven. Fashionable funerals and gaudy monuments have called out savage sarcasm from the press lately, and even remonstrance from the pulpit; but we are not sure that the blame belongs to the mourners to whom it is given, or to the "snobbish all-prevalent American love of display," which, it is alleged, finds here its last and most offensive utterance. The poor Irish widow who spends the money which would have kept her children for the winter, in "a dacent funeral for Pathrick,"—hacks, and burning candles, and white gloves,—does it, we would fain believe, not from a stagy love of excitement, but with the fond, foolish hope that somehow Patrick knows and is pleased; and the dweller on Murray Hill whose dead is snatched when the last breath is yet on its lips, to be barred from her by forms and ceremonies—to be heaped with floral offerings and borne to the grave amid pompous drapery and the glitter and show of liveried equipages, yields to custom only that she may not seem to the public to slight the memory which she would be glad all the world should honor. Human nature is just as loyal and just as tender in a brown-stone front as in an Irish cabin, and much more apt to feel pomp an insult, and the sorrow of an undertaker a mockery of its real grief. But human nature is weak and off guard on such a day, and the undertaker is as ready and watchful as death itself.

One of the most pathetic memorials of a dead child we have ever seen was in a stately mansion belonging to one of the Brahmin class, as Holmes calls it, of New England. It was the chamber of the daughter, who was dead; an only child, who had been very fair, and more beloved than even only children are. The chamber, full of light and luxury and beauty, was made ready for her coming every morning. There

were her old school-books, there was the soft white bed, the dainty dresses in the wardrobe, the little slippers by the fire; and there, day after day, sat the mother, waiting, waiting. The dreariness, the hopeless hope, the pity of it all, was something never to be forgotten.

Last week we chanced to pass through a hospital sustained expressly for poor children. The wards were sunny and cheerful; the fresh morning wind from a broad, bright river blew in at the open windows; inside there were patient, motherly nurses; without, green grass and waving trees, scarlet and golden with the early frosts. The children, brought out of miserable homes in filthy tenement houses, lay clean and sweet each in his little cozy bed, or sat up on the pillow in a white night-slip, hugging, as we noticed, a doll or toy. It seemed to us that here Christ's charity lingered among men in its simplest, most direct form. It seemed as if here the old German legend might be true, and that on Christmas morning, if the Christ-child did come back to earth with the form and face his loving mother knew, it would be to these poor babies he would come, to leave his blessing on them and those who had cared for them.

At the head of each bed was a card bearing the name of the person by whose charity it was kept, year after year, ready for a helpless little inmate. But upon one—in the sunniest corner—there was no name, only the words, "In memory of my baby." "An unknown lady," the matron said, "who had lost her only child." Instead of carved altar-piece, or stately monument, or stained memorial window, she had this little bed, and the poor baby in it was saved from want and death. Over it was a picture of the Christ-child smiling, with his hands outstretched.

The little story of this memorial offering seems to us to belong to this Christmas season, when all the Christian world is giving gifts. There are so many ways to make our own children about the hearth happy and glad—so many people to tell us how to do it. But many of us have hidden away the memory of a little face that is not here, that never will be here

again, to which even in heaven we would fain bring back for a moment the old home smile.

There are the sick children suffering in their filthy homes ; there is room yet in the hospitals for other memorial beds ; and we have faith or superstition enough to believe that when one of these little ones on earth is tenderly cared for, the child whom Christ holds in his arms above knows it, and is glad.

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*" OH, KEEP MY MEMORY GREEN ! "*

WE know a tender and mourning mother that, after the loss of her only son, added, in his name, to the town library, a department of valuable books of reference for the use of mechanics, who, but for her liberality, would have been unable to consult the authorities of which they have so great need. How much more likely are they to remember him, and to associate his memory with love, than if they were to read a swelling epitaph on a stately monument dedicated to his memory ?

Another lady, a most dutiful and devoted daughter, marked her mother's grave by a simple slab, and appropriated the money, that might have purchased a costlier stone, toward educating, in her mother's name, a poor blind girl, who, when she grew up, was enabled largely to provide for herself, and so keep out of the almshouse, from which she had been taken.

These are but two of many instances that might be mentioned of affectionate and noble tributes to the dead, not by shaft or statue, but by lifting up the lowly, and helping those in need of help.

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*OLD CLOTHES AND COLD VICTUALS.*

THERE is a pretty story of a French country family, which every mother should read to teach her the true practical method of charity. She would learn how, in the careful, pious French woman's *ménage*, no scrap of clothing or food is suffered to go to waste; and how the value of old garments is doubled by their being cut and altered to fit the poor children to whom they are given. We propose that every housekeeper who reads this shall begin to make of this year a prolonged Christmas. Let her first find one or more really needy families who are willing to work, and therefore deserve such help as she can give. This is a much safer outlet for her charity than any agency or benevolent society. In every household there is a perpetual stock of articles—clothes, bedding, furniture—too shabby for use, and which in the great majority of cases are torn up, thrown away, or become the perquisites of greedy servants already overpaid. As soon as the house-mother has some definite live objects of charity in her mind, it is astonishing how quickly these articles accumulate, and how serviceable they become by aid of a patch here, or tuck there, sewed by her own skilled fingers. Our children should each be allowed to give away their own half-worn clothes or toys. The shoes or top given in the fullness of their little hearts to some barefoot Mary or Bob whom they know, will teach them more of the spirit and practice of Christian charity than a dozen missionary boxes full of pennies for the far-off heathen. The same oversight should be exercised by the mother of a family in the matter of food. Enough wholesome provision, it is safe to say, is wasted in the kitchen of every well-to-do American family to feed another of half its size. Very few ladies will tolerate regular back-gate beggars, and the cold meat, bread, etc., go into the garbage cart, because nobody knows precisely what to do with them. A woman of society, or one with dominant æsthetic tastes, will very likely resent the suggestion that she should give half an hour daily to the collection and distribution of this food to her starving

neighbors. But if they go unfed, what apology will it be for her in the time of closing accounts that her weekly receptions were the most agreeable in town? If she would establish, for instance, a big soup digester on the back of her range, and insist that all bones or scraps should go into it, her own hands could serve out nourishing basins of broth to many a famishing soul the winter round, and really it would be as fine a deed as though she had conquered Chopin on the ivory keys.

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### *MAKING PRESENTS.*

IT certainly seems a little odd that so general a custom as that of making presents should often be as perplexing as it is pleasant. It would seem as if, money and taste being taken for granted, the task of selection, especially in our cities where every taste and almost every person can be suited, would be quite an easy one.

The common objects in the purchase of presents are very few: we want, in the first place, to express regard, then to please our friends, and finally to avoid duplicating anything they already possess or are likely to receive. But the trouble is, that purchasers too rarely put these objects definitely to themselves. The one fact before them is that they are to select and buy a certain number of gifts, and from this vagueness arises half the trouble. It is not likely to be true that what is suitable for mother may also do for John, or that Paul and Pauline may have identical tastes. The bride who receives a half-dozen molasses pitchers, as many soup-ladles, any number of sugar-tongs, and tea-spoons by the score, may be pardoned if she has something of the feeling that prompted a young clergyman to say, in sending a bushel of slippers to a New Year's fair, that the ladies of his congregation, in presenting him with them, must have thought he was a centipede. A certain

bridegroom cut the knot tied by the duplication of presents by sending all the fans, except one, received by his wife, back to their donors, asking them to please change them for something else. Very few persons, however, have as much moral courage as he—donors are often obliged to see the struggle in a friend's manner as he endeavors to make his appreciation of the intention conquer his sense of the unsuitability of the gift.

The most evident ground of choice would seem to be found in the friend's personal taste. There is no excuse for us if we send bronzes to the young lady who cannot tell them from Berlin iron, but who knows genuine coral at a glance; nor for wasting books on people who have no time to read, or rare old china on those who think nothing better than a granite coffee-cup. A very little reflection will teach us to send our various presents where they will at least find appreciation.

But the real principle in this matter has not yet been here expressed. It is not enough to give suitable gifts, nor to avoid sending our coals to Newcastle. What we really want to express is personal association. If the article is of value in itself alone, our friend might as well buy it for himself, and we make a pauper of him in giving it. But if it has direct reference to him, and if it expresses us as well as our regard, it has a value that neither money nor taste can otherwise give it.

We get at this principle in the purchase of gifts by making them express the point of harmony between us. We are all many-sided, and choose our friends, not for their likeness to each other, nor because they all suit one phase of our character. We love two alike, although they are so dissimilar that they cannot agree, but each of them suits us in different ways. We know why we care for each, and so it is not difficult to give it expression. Therefore, although you and your friend may care for both books and pictures, if you talk of twenty books to one picture, let your gift be for his library shelves, not for its walls. If you go to concerts together, send her music or something upon the subject; if he receives you in his laboratory, send your remembrance there, or if he is always eager to show you a new fossil or a curious shell, remember that geology

and conchology each has its literature, its rare specimens. In this way our gifts are a benefit not only to those who receive them, but also to ourselves.

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### OUR OLD BOOKS AND PERIODICALS.

IN that grand upheaval of household affairs commonly termed "the spring cleaning," when waifs and strays turn up in the most out-of-the-way places to remind one of their forgotten existence, the harvest of literary matter gathered in this way in "a reading family"—of odd numbers of magazines, cast-away novels, discarded text-books, juvenile works, etc.—is something surprising. It is also perplexing to the housekeeper, who despairingly asks: "What shall I do with them?" No one being able to solve the problem, she orders them into the lumber-closet, and when they accumulate until they are obtrusively inconvenient, they are sold for old paper, to get them out of the way.

Hundreds of illustrated and other weekly papers are bought every day by travelers to beguile an hour or two of a railway journey, and left in the cars; and tourists purchase magazines, novels, and sometimes more valuable books, which they leave at hotels, not choosing to burden themselves with further care of them.

Young ladies who have but little to do procure books and journals *ad libitum* to help them to pass away the time. Most of these, they throw aside after one reading.

Piles of daily and weekly papers are constantly accumulating at the offices of men of business, eventually kindling fires or finding their way to the paper dealers.

Housekeepers, travelers, young women of leisure, men of business, do you ever think of the thousands of human beings in poverty-stricken homes, in almshouses, in hospitals, in



prisons, in pauper lunatic asylums, to whom all this material, worthless to you, would bring the liveliest happiness? Do your eyes ever light upon the notices inserted in the papers from time to time, informing the public that at such and such places donations of old papers, magazines, and books will be thankfully received for distribution among the poor and sick? Would it not be a good idea to copy one or more of these addresses into your memorandum-book?

Not long since, a gentleman visiting a charity hospital, remembering that he had some illustrated papers in his pocket, gave them to an old man there who could not read. He would have forgotten the circumstance if he had not been reminded of it by one of the physicians of the institution whom he met afterward. "He has not yet finished studying those pictures," continued the doctor, after mentioning the incident. "Do you remember the dull, vacant countenance of the man? You would be surprised now at its sprightliness, and when I spoke to him of the change, he said: 'Oh, Doctor! you can't know what a joy these papers have been to me! I have lain on this bed week after week. I have counted again and again all the squares in this counterpane; I can shut my eyes and put my finger on any particular figure in it. I know every speck on the walls of my room. I can tell just how many bricks in the wall of the opposite building can be counted through my window, and I have been *so* tired until I got these papers.'"

Is not such a result worth the expenditure of a little trouble, a postage-stamp, and a newspaper wrapper? Generous-hearted people often complain that they can give nothing, because they have no money to bestow; and yet there are so many tender charities that require very little money, and sometimes none at all.

If travelers would mail books and journals to some charitable institution, instead of leaving them scattered about in cars and hotels, the benefit conferred would be out of all proportion to the small amount of trouble requisite. Stay-at-home readers can take their discarded books to some poor unfort-

unate they may chance to know, or send them to those who are interested in public charities, that they may dispose of them. And even many invalids (who are generally great readers) will, doubtless, be glad to learn that although apparently able to do so little for themselves or any one else, they have this opportunity afforded them of so greatly helping other invalids, more unfortunate than themselves, to an enjoyment for which they are too poor to pay.

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### *THE PAIRING SEASON.*

“Married in May—  
The bride of a day,”

SAYS the old rhyme. But sunshine defies augury. Happy eyes refuse to look for skeletons beneath the tender green of spring; modern incredulity laughs at ancient saws; and May and its flowery sisters, June and July, are become distinctively the marrying months of the year.

As the vernal spray deepens on boughs of elm and maple, brown-stone fronts begin, likewise, to put forth leaves—of invitation, engraven on the very best of card-board. Dress-makers' bills swell with the swelling buds; odors of bride-cake pervade and struggle with the faint, sweet fragrance of growing things. Tiny homes, which feathered lovers newly wed are busily decorating with sticks and straws, are startled by the switch of silken skirts, on rapid passage “down-town” to provide for other lovers. Alas! what voluminous appanage of this world's gear! The very churches take on airs and “trick their beams,” and flame over arch and pillar with device and monogram of gaudy flowers; while organs, in whose construction the *stop* has apparently been omitted, peal forth an unintermitting “Wedding March,” till that time-honored tune takes rank in our wearied tympanums with “Shoo Fly” and “Old Dog Tray.”

Each blossom, as it appears, is pounced upon for a "decoration." Balusters bourgeon, cornice and ceiling, mantel and picture-frame, bud and blossom like Aaron's rod. Snowy roses engarland gas-fixtures, and shy, surprised lilies find themselves wired and imprisoned in "bridal bells."

"All this beauty and peace and sweetness,  
All this fragrance and grace and dying,"

all these innocent lives poured out to adorn a single hour! But who will venture to regret? What tribute too precious, what symbol too exquisite, for that supreme hour which sets the crown on human lives, and opens wide the beautiful gate of that temple whose name is Love?

Happy roses, to lend sweetness to that sweetest moment! Happy violets in the mimic clapper, whose swing elicits fragrance more delectable than sound! Even so, without the assistance of florists, the unwired flowers of Eden smiled on that first fair bridal, when Mr. and Mrs. Primal Man stood, as seen in the Catechism, to receive congratulations from all beasts and birds of earth. No ushers, "no cards," and—wonderful to think of—no *trousseau*.

In our new Eden things are different. Adam and Eve, though doubtless important, are no longer paramount in the ceremony. They are but the occasion—the provocation—of a long train of grandeurs and expenses, without which modern marriage would seem impossible; and if the cards, the supper, the gifts, and the gowns could be had as well without bride and groom as with them, it is questionable if the company would not easily agree to dispense with these "leading features," and relegate poor Adam and Eve to single blessedness,—or, in fact, to no blessedness at all,—with most comfortable indifference!

For it cannot be denied that what with fuss, fatigue, and cost, a wedding nowadays is a bore to most parties concerned. When the cards come in, the family acquaintance groan aloud: "Oh dear, I suppose I must send Emily something! What a nuisance it is! This is the eighteenth wedding present this

spring!" The home is "*bouleversé*" for months; the bride reduced to skin and bone by shopping, dress-making, card-directing, list-compiling, note-writing, "trying-on." There is no time for sentiment—for love-making—for that tranquil bliss which is the dew of souls. Edwin finds Angelina always on the sofa—too tired to talk—too tired to drive—almost too tired to smile. He bides his time, being used to the phenomenon. "Girls always get worn out in their preparations," Angelina's mother tells him. In fact, he recollects the brides of his acquaintance as generally bad-colored and skinny, so it must be "the thing," and inevitable, like Destiny.

For a week before the wedding, St. Vitus presides over the door-bell. The bride's person seems attached as by invisible wires to its handle. Each outward twitch produces a corresponding inward twitch. The express-man, waiting for his receipt, catches glimpses of a head with hot, feverish cheeks hanging over the baluster. It is Angelina craning her neck in anxious expectation of "presents." Reluctant opulence knows what is demanded, and showers gems, lace, silver, *bijouterie*, bronze, in reckless profusion. By and by, human invention being exhausted, the splendors begin to repeat themselves in duplicate or triplicate. As tea-pots accumulate, paralysis falls on sated desire. But then there are the brides-maids to be considered, and the brides-maids' dresses, and the breakfast for the *côrtege*, and the "Last German," and the rehearsal. And though Angelina's back aches dreadfully, and the soles of her feet burn like fire, not a quiet second is allowed her. The bones in her girlish neck are hidden with blonde; strong coffee winds up the exhausted nerves; the symbolisms, once so full of meaning—now so vapid, are mechanically observed; the kiss, the "woven hands," the train of virgins, the ring, the prayer—and, stupefied and delirious with excitement, as the poor Hindu suttee with "Bhang," the bride is hurried into her new life as fevered, as dulled, and almost as beyond rational reflection as she.

Even quiet country towns have caught the infection. Everywhere are the same wearisome mummeries reiterated,



with the additional labor involved by distance from shops and confectioners. The simple village weddings we used to hear about are no more. As well not be married, cry our rustic maidens, as dispense with cards, reception, and bands of music. They even out-Grundy Grundy, and the velvet train and eight brides-maids of the English princess are repeated in remote Kalamazoo.

Shall we ever better this? Who knows? Perhaps, when that great revolution comes, so feelingly prophesied now and then by indignant "dailies," when a corrupt judiciary and a monster monopoly are to dangle side by side from city lamp-posts, and bench and bar, pulpit and patriotism, to undergo regeneration, the real meanings of real words will be restored, and the paltry husks be stripped from sacred things. Then the revised dictionary will make its appearance, and no longer reading "Wedding—A crisis of clothes"; "Bride—A peg on which finery is hung"; "Bridegroom—A black object following the bride like a point of admiration"! the dear old definitions will make their appearance again in letters of gold. And then shall

"Come the world's great bridals, chaste and calm—  
Then spring the crowning race of human kind.  
May these things be!"

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### *ON FOUNDING A HOME.*

FIRST secure a home, which is, a house to live in, and the proper people in it to compose the foundations of home life. Directions as to house decoration or skillful cookery, or the control of cook or chambermaid, are of very little account, if the people who sit down in the pretty rooms day by day find their hearts torn by jealousy, or their brains rasped by nervous irritation. Let Tom and Amelia turn from the altar,

resolving to start fair and give themselves the largest chance of a clear understanding of each other, and, in consequence, of future happiness. Let them turn their backs on boarding-houses, shut their eyes to all considerations of style, be deaf to all hints of Mrs. Grundy's expectations, and buy or rent a house within their means. If they are too poor for a house, then a flat; if not a flat, a room; or, if the worst comes to the worst, let them hire, like our friends at Rudder Grange, a canal-boat; only let them go to housekeeping, and *go to it alone*. Comfortable quarters, perhaps, are offered them in the house of one of their parents, who very naturally try to keep the young birds, just mated, a little longer in the old nest, especially if they are well-to-do people, to whom the addition to the family will be only a pleasure and no burden. Amelia's husband not being able to support her in the style to which she has been accustomed, what can be more proper than that they should occupy part of her father's mansion, and reap the benefit of well-trained servants, carriages, and sumptuous fare? Or some other motive of economy or affection dictates their plans. Amelia's mamma being a widow, and devoted to her child, why should she live alone in her house, peopled for her, perhaps, by ghosts of the beloved dead? Why not take the spare room in the young people's house and make a part of their new life? Or it may be Tom's unmarried sister or bachelor uncle who comes in to make a third in the partnership just begun. Now this new-comer may be the most clever, amiable, dearest soul in the world, and the arrangement one dictated by prudential motives and affection; but ninety times in a hundred it is destructive of the fine tone and temper of the newly formed household. The first year of married life is a passage, at the best, over dangerous quicksands; no matter how intimate their knowledge of each other was before marriage, husband and wife have now to find each other out in a thousand new and unexpected phases, and to adjust themselves each to the other in the habits, tastes, even language of every day. It will require all the tact and the patience which love gives to enable them to do this, and the interference, even the

presence, of a third party is always a disturbing element. The more dear and near the relations of this third party, the more apt are they to come between the wife and husband. Unfortunately, too, the whole tone of wedded life usually receives its key-note from this first year; and so invariably damaging is the influence of outsiders upon it, that the best receipt, probably, to insure a happy marriage would be to make a holocaust of all kinsfolk on the wedding day. As that is not practicable, let Amelia and Tom live as much apart as is possible for at least twelve months, selfish as such reserve may appear to their families. It is a duty which they owe to each other. After they have become in a measure one, and the uncertainty and disquietude of the storms and sunshine of early marriage have given place to a settled home atmosphere, the occasional presence of strangers has usually a wholesome influence. With the companionship of a guest now and then, Tom and Amelia are less likely to find their thoughts and opinions grow stale and tedious. Charity, too, assumes no more beautiful form than in a gracious hospitality, especially to those who are needy in body or mind. We know certain households where there is always to be found an orphan girl going to school with the other children, or a helpless old black "Aunty" in her chair by the kitchen fire, or some other waif warmed and sheltered from the cold without. We remember a certain young girl to whom books were a hopeless mystery, but who, like most Virginian women, was skilled in housewifery, who took into her father's house, one after another, girls of fourteen from an adjoining mill, and trained them herself as seamstresses and cooks, teaching them to read and write at the same time. Before and after her marriage she fitted and placed eight women in useful, honorable careers of life. The home, when founded, should always be large enough to give place to some creature needing help, or it may be too small for any blessing to rest upon, which falls like dew from above.

*THE SLAVERY OF TO-DAY.*

A VERY clever hit entitled "Hidden Despotism" appeared in one of our weeklies a number of years ago. The first Japanese Embassy had come and gone, and the national flutter thereafter had scarcely subsided. The sketch, written in a grave, historical form, purported to give the impression produced upon the Japanese mind by our American institutions, customs, and manners. Beneath the freedom conferred by the Constitution a subtle but controlling tyranny was detected, though its nature and its source remained hidden in mystery. After much discussion and philosophizing, a Japanese *savan* was dispatched to seek out and formulate this subtle power, and to determine and measure the modification it exercised upon the republican freedom of society. The tireless efforts of the philosopher were at last rewarded by success: the rod of iron by which society was ruled was discovered to be in the hands of the Irish "girl."

Few mistresses have been so fortunate as entirely to escape this subjugation. And yet, whose fault is it? It is more than could be expected, even of the most enlightened human nature, to refrain from ruling when willing subjects present themselves. Where tyranny is exercised there must of necessity be two elements—the tyrant and the slave.

There are many reasons why really excellent, efficient servants attain a complete ascendancy in a multitude of homes. Girls of the present day—each one of whom in a few years will, in all probability, be at the head of a large establishment—are educated to do absolutely nothing. They are sent to school, probably to a fashionable boarding-school; they dip into all the "ologies" and come out with a smattering of many subjects, but with minds in a far less vigorous, healthy, and rational condition than that in which they went in. They rush into the rapid and empty whirl of society—balls, parties, kettle-drums, calls, theater, opera, and, when other things fail, inordinate church-going—till the small remnant of what they have learned is effectually dissipated.



Without any special training for her duties, and, what is of infinitely more consequence, lacking a well-disciplined reason, self-control, and moral earnestness, such a girl marries, and is installed as queen of her own little kingdom,—a kingdom that needs constant vigilance, intelligence, and executive ability. The first tyranny is the worst of all—anarchy. The poor little wife, after the misery and discomfort of trying to rule ignorant servants, and endeavoring to teach them what she does not herself know, falls an easy victim to the first efficient woman who, as cook or housekeeper, consents to take charge of her ill-regulated *ménage* and reduce it to order. She gladly sells her birthright for a mess of pottage, always providing the pottage be well cooked and well served.

No woman, capable of doing higher work, should consent to become a mere drudge if her circumstances permit her to delegate the household work to other hands. But, just for this very reason, she should inform herself in regard to every kind of work which is to be done in her house. A large part of it she should know how to do with her own hands. She should be able to go into the kitchen and show her cook how to make bread, roast meat, prepare vegetables; she should understand the correct ways of sweeping, dusting, bed-making; she should be able to set a table, wash dishes, polish silver. She should know when the laundry work is badly done, why the clothes are muddy in color, streaked with blue, flimsy, or ill-smelling—and how to rectify the evil. Such knowledge will not add to the drudgery of life, but will save an immense amount of worry, anxiety, waste, and trouble. To know just how to do a thing is the way to command and insure its being well done by dependents.

As a matter of common honesty, no woman has a right to marry—even to marry a rich man, in our unsettled state of society—who does not know how to order a house, how to apportion and direct the work of her servants, and how to oversee it intelligently. She is entering into a contract which she has not taken the trouble to fit herself to fulfill. Marriage is, or should be, something far above and beyond this; but

there is, nevertheless, a material side to it. All the grace, the beauty of life are valueless, apart from a fulfillment of the homely duties which belong to it. Putting aside all the higher obligations, as beyond the question at issue, a woman when she marries tacitly undertakes to perform the inside duties of the home, just as her husband undertakes the outside work which shall insure its support. Her obligation to administer the means supplied her is just as solemn as his to supply them. If the household work does not go smoothly and well, she will find that she has no time or spirits to make home bright and sweet.

A girl who has grown up in a well-ordered home has at least the advantage of possessing a good ideal of household comfort. Though she may have been kept in dense ignorance of the means by which such results have been attained, she will at least know toward what she is working; the not knowing how to reach her result will entail much heart-sickening despondency, many failures, and many tears. It is the most foolish, the most cruel, policy on the part of a mother to permit a young girl to undertake the duties of married life without adequate preparation, special or general, to meet the responsibilities involved. And yet how many mothers do this, and justify themselves, with a curious mixture of indolence, selfishness, and tenderness, by saying, "She will never be young but once; I want her to enjoy life while she can."

One of the main difficulties in the adjustment of domestic service comes from our artificial mode of life. The machine-like regularity with which our daily life moves on has a sadly dehumanizing tendency. The relation between those who serve and those who are served has come to be so rigidly fixed, and the human element so entirely eliminated, that it might almost be expressed by a mathematical formula. Every day and many times a day we come into contact with people who have no claims upon us, nor we upon them. We meet for the purpose of making a cold and calculating exchange of service or property, on the one hand, for a stipulated amount of money on the other. In many cases this is as it should be.

The orbit of our lives must touch many others which it is neither necessary nor right that they should intersect.

There are relations, however, quite as incompatible with any recognition of social equality as these, where the humanities have a place; such, for instance, as that between mistress and maid. In a certain sense, a servant coming into a family severs her relation with her own people; in that sense the new relations should supply the loss. The kitchen walls should not inclose a dependency in revolt, where the prevailing feeling, under the outward appearance of cheerful civility, is that of a strong class antagonism; they should include a part of the organic family life. The house should never be divided against itself.

A young housekeeper is always in danger of shipwreck upon one of two dangerous rocks. She is apt either to treat her servants as equals, or as machines, and so forfeit either their respect or their love. The suggestion of loving service in our modern life is so foreign to our notions as to seem almost ludicrous. And yet, just here it is that the secret of perfect service lies. And just here it is, too, that we American women make the fatal mistake. The relation is usually founded upon a cold, hard, purely mercenary basis. We give our money and our work to foreign, possibly to domestic, missions, and we forget that into our hands have been given, in a certain though limited sense, souls perhaps starving for sympathy, or hanging on the very verge of destruction. It is not quite enough that you, as mistress of a household, should be firm and kind, high-principled and self-controlled, though that is far more than most women can pretend to be; but you should feel a sense of personal obligation in the relation between yourself and your servants. A young, ignorant, perhaps pretty, girl is brought into your house, and this is her first situation. She is cut off from such restraints as have been around her in the home she has left. Her new sense of liberty is sweet to her, and is apt to be too much for her. It is not enough that you train her in her special work, though that is much. You must remember

that she is human, that she is young and a woman; that she has her joys and sorrows, her heart-sickness and disappointments; her small vanities, and fluttering hopes, and peculiar temptations. The very fact that, with all the work she has to do, her material surroundings are brighter and easier than those to which she has been accustomed, that she is warmed, clothed, and fed, leaves her free to feel the flatness and monotony of her life. The familiarity with elegancies before unknown to her creates a want; temptations crowd thick upon her. You, her mistress, who have introduced her into this new life of temptation, are in a degree responsible. You should take some oversight of her evenings; you should leave as little temptation to small pilfering as possible in her way. This first experience may determine, for good or for evil, her life here and hereafter.

The only way open to a mistress for the exercise of such an influence, without that meddling to which no lady can condescend, is to remember always that this servant is not merely a device for the accomplishment of certain work, but a human being who has claims upon her consideration and her sympathy. Servants are unquestionably hired to perform certain offices, and do certain work; it is no kindness to them to accept as satisfactory careless and imperfect service. But since we are always failing in our duties as mistresses, let us cultivate charity and forgiveness for the frailties of others. It is quite possible to be both strict and lenient—strict in maintaining a high ideal even in regard to the petty details of daily life, and lenient to the frailty which fails of reaching our standard.

Special directions how to deal with servants would be almost as impertinent as such directions in regard to the training of children, but if the true relation is established and the proper feeling cherished,—that feeling which recognizes the difference of station and at the same time the oneness of nature,—the details can scarcely fail of presenting and adjusting themselves.

In order to establish the proper state of things, a lady should, in the first place, know precisely to the minutest detail



the work which each servant in her house is to do; and know as well how that work should be done. The new waitress, chamber-maid, maid-of-all-work, or whatever she may be, should, when she is hired, be told what will be expected of her. She should also be given general directions each day as to the duties of the day, and the order in which they are to be done. If she is familiar with the duties of the place she has taken, it is, perhaps, best to let her go to work in her own way, and then make such changes as the individual tastes, wishes, or habits of the mistress may dictate. Every servant who is a good worker has ways peculiar to herself, and she will work better in her own way than in any other. If the results are thoroughly satisfactory, it is well to give individuality a little play. If, however, the work is new to the servant, the same routine should be followed each day, the same orders given and the same oversight exercised as at first, till she is thoroughly drilled. Particular orders conflicting with the general should be given with a recognition in words that the general duties must be deferred for the special. Nothing is so paralyzing, even to the disciplined mind, as a conflict between duties. A margin of time and energy should be allowed each day, in which special or unexpected work may be accommodated. While a mistress sees that her orders are reasonable, she should also insist that they be received in respectful silence or with cheerful assent, and *standing*, and also that they be literally obeyed.

Whatever is done imperfectly or forgotten, no matter how small the thing may be, should be noticed and corrected, and whatever is especially well done commended. A kind word of notice is not very hard to bestow, and it gives point and emphasis to reproof, raising it above the mere level of fault-finding.

While it is a cardinal mistake to do servants' work for them, it is only right and Christian to notice when they are ill and unfit for work, and then to offer practical sympathy in the way of aid. There is a vast deal of cruelty practiced on servants in keeping them to their work when they are really ill.

Of course, in such a case the poor creature has the liberty of leaving, but if she is honest and has not, by means of small pilferings, feathered a nest for herself outside, to which she may go, it may not always be possible for her to forfeit part of a month's wages, or even to lose her place.

It is always good policy, if nothing more, to be courteous to servants, to recognize little voluntary acts of politeness on their part. Done in the right way it never makes a rule less stringent, but only less galling. And it is always the worst possible policy to scold. Quiet and dignified reproof, of course, must be given, but scolding never. Nothing that cannot be effected without scolding was ever effected with it, unless it be the silent contempt of the servant for her mistress.

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### *POLITENESS TO SERVANTS.*

**I**S there not, or at least ought there not to be, a code of etiquette for the kitchen as well as for the parlor—for conduct toward inferiors as well as equals?

We make our plea for politeness in the kitchen on the following grounds:

*First.* No lady can afford, for her own sake, to be otherwise than gentle, thoughtful, and courteous in the administration of household matters. If she reserves her best manners for the parlor, where so small a portion of the average American housekeeper's time is spent, it is likely that they will not always be easily put on. The habitual deportment leaves marks upon the countenance and the manner which no sudden effort can produce. And at housekeeping there are at best so many unexpected occurrences, not always agreeable, that nothing but a *habit* of self-control and serenity can tide us over them creditably. According to John Newton, it sometimes requires more grace to bear the breaking of a china plate

than the death of an only son; and there is a good deal of truth under the seeming absurdity. Have we not all proved by experience that we bear with least equanimity the daily, petty vexations which are unexpected, and apparently unnecessary? But there are many small miseries to one great affliction, and if character is to be improved by tribulations, it must be mainly by those of every day—the pin-pricks for which we are ashamed to demand sympathy.

*Second.* For the sake of *family* comfort we must have comfort in the kitchen. Willing and unwilling service are readily distinguishable by every member of the household. We can all of us remember how the atmosphere of a dinner party has been suddenly chilled by a few words of unnecessary blame to a servant. To mortify a person is not usually to reform him. On the other hand, how delightful to a guest are those homes where the relations of masters and servants are friendly; where short-comings on the part of the latter are delicately excused in public, and judiciously investigated in private. I say, advisedly, investigated rather than reprovèd; for undeserved misfortune may happen alike to all, and there may be occasion for sympathy rather than blame. If Biddy has had bad news from over the sea, must we not take that into account when we find fault with the gravy? I think sometimes we do not remember sufficiently that those who serve us are not machines, but men and women of like passions, and sorrows, and tempers with ourselves.

*Third.* For the sake of our servants themselves, we must pay them due politeness. Humanity, says Bacon, is sooner won by courtesy than by real benefits. If one would make thorough and efficient servants out of raw material, it must be done by patience and long-suffering. You say they are provokingly stupid; we will suppose they are; but if we have to deal with stupidity, let us use the means best adapted to it. Will intimidation succeed? Did you ever find that scolding made an order more intelligible, or caused anything but broken dishes and ill-cooked dinners? Then try gentleness a little while; if that will not accomplish anything, send away

your servant, and try another. You cannot afford to lose your temper; and a person on whom persistent kindness is thrown away, can render you no intelligent or permanent service.

We put it to the common sense of our readers, whether self-preservation, comfort, and duty do not all require of us a little more attention to kitchen etiquette?

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“*SHE*.”

IT is said that, in the rural districts of our beloved land, whenever a woman is heard to use the pronoun “he” without prefix, it may safely be taken to mean her husband; and whenever the pronoun “she,” to mean her “help.”

To a degree this holds good of other localities not so strictly rural. With American femaledom in general, wherever housekeepers do congregate and caps and bonnets nod toward each other in eager converse, “she says,” “she dids,” “is shes?” “does shes?” rustle each other like leaves in Val-lambrosa, pronounced, now sadly, now inquiringly, now in tones of wrath, and again with that little accompanying click which speaks such a volume of sympathy. And no wonder—for upon this all-important “she,”—this pronoun which might be classed as “possessive,” so does it hold our thoughts and anxieties,—depend half our usefulness and all the comfort of our daily lives.

It is “she” who peoples hotels, and drives happy families to the shelter of the dingy boarding-house! “She” is a depopulator of neighborhoods. Affix this stigma to any spot,—“you ’ll never get a girl to stay with you,”—and vain henceforward are the wiles of the house-agent, charm he never so wisely. In the arrangement of a home “she” takes share in the council.



“When would Bridget go to church?”—“Is Ann likely to be satisfied without anybody to drop in of an evening?”—“I don’t like to ask Catharine to go so far away from all her friends.” Such are the communings of the would-be householders. And thus, amid the plans and wishes of persons infinitely her superiors in refinement, taste, and breeding, the inevitable “she” plays her part—a weight in the balance, an unknown quantity for whose sake many known advantages are foregone, a mote in that sunbeam which else might freely shine.

No longer do we ask merely, “Has Angelina got a good husband?” No, indeed. The Edwin of to-day is but one feature of the social problem. “And has she got a good cook?” is a question almost as important. Edwin may be an angel—but while the herb and fruit question presses, Angelina cannot but sigh occasionally at the thought of the untrammelled palmer’s weed she put off when she consented to share his hermitage. And looking at the ill-supplied scribe and the care-worn Angelina, Edwin may scarcely be blamed if now and then longings for his bachelor cell visit him. It is sorry ending for a poem, but many poems end so, and for the broken rhythm and the jangled measure we must make responsible that worm in our domestic bud—the all impossible “she.”

This “little rift within the lute,” whom for convenience’ sake we will call Bridget, has on the other hand a stand-point of her own which it behooves us to consider. True, it is never easy to perceive another’s stand-point, but woe to that nation or that individual to whom it is *impossible*.

Let us therefore imagine ourselves for the moment shorn of all bright beams of education, precedent, training, and incorporated with the twenty-year-old body and the immature, unlettered mind of a Bridget. Senses, selfishness, a tendency to shirk work, a desire to “better ourselves” (natural to all at twenty) contend in us with some shyness, much awkwardness, and a considerable capacity for impulsive affection—principally expended on old things and friends, but in some

measure elicited by kindness whenever met with. We are, let it be observed, a newly landed Bridget. Of the Bridget of ten years later, she of the brazen voice, the artificial flowers, the intelligence-office, there is little to be hoped and less desired. But Bridget indeed is a creature of possibilities; her flowering depends much upon the quality of cultivation in fine, and it is greatly to our advantage that it should be of the best.

How do things go with us after we and our poor little trunk are landed on the star-spangled shore? Well, first we stay with a "friend" for a night or two, and collect many improving facts as to "missuses" and wages, and then we get a place. As we dive into its basement kitchen, and survey the wondrous apparatus of faucets, ovens, wash-tubs, boilers, no snipe of our native bogs could feel less at home than we. We give further stares hither and yon, and gasp inwardly, but far be it from us to confess ignorance of anything that is asked. Our new mistress, longing to get out of the kitchen and be saved trouble, crowds us with rapid orders.

"There will be a pair of ducks for dinner. Do you know how to stuff ducks?"

"Yes m'm."

"Put a great deal of summer-savory in—Mr. Smith is fond of it; and be sure and have the gravy smooth. Potatoes, and tomatoes, and macaroni will be the vegetables. You can cook macaroni?"

"Y—is—plaze m'm."

"Don't forget the cheese for the top. It just spoils macaroni to leave out cheese. And for dessert we 'll have some sort of pudding. What kind can you make?"

"I 'd be afther making bread-puddens oncet"—and we grin over the remembered accomplishment.

"Bread-pudding! oh, I don't fancy that. Make a plain rice-pudding—that's easy, I'm sure. And have dinner at five, *exactly*, for Mr. Smith is very particular. I think that's all. I shall be out, but Jane will tell you where things are if you don't know."

Whereupon the new "missus" sails away, leaving us to blank confusion. We do our best if we are a pretty well-disposed Bridget, but our best is very bad. The summer-savory goes into the pudding and the cheese on the ducks, potatoes are singed, the mysterious tomato drives us wild, the fowls — half raw, half burnt up — are put on the platter in the "now I lay me down to sleep" attitude, and reprobation loud and dire is heard from the upper regions. So it goes on day by day. We blunder, we destroy, we learn a very little and forget a great deal; no one plans clearly, explains fully, or undertakes the educating process in our behalf. Worse — there is an unkind side, which our warm heart feels and resents. "Followers" are forbidden in the kitchen. That seems hard; but, harder yet, our female friends are darkly frowned on when they drop in. "I like a quiet kitchen," the "missus" says, — but above — a great deal of noise goes on in the parlor! There is no provision for our pleasures — no sympathy for our pains; we do not attach ourselves, we strike no roots in the unfriendly soil, and by and by it is easy, on some occasion of special discontent, to give the usual warning and remove to another place. As time goes on, habits of restlessness and discontent grow chronic; one kitchen after another receives our afflicting ministrations, and we become the public pest, the ill-disposed, shifting, shiftless Irish servant.

Now, suppose instead of this that we are so lucky as to make our *entrée* into American life in the household of a mistress sagacious enough to comprehend us and our ignorance, and unselfish enough to be willing to grapple wisely with both. Perceiving the perplexities of our new surroundings, she gives up some days to careful and patient explanation of the uses and places of things. She does not content herself with general orders, but goes into minute detail, as to a child, illustrating each with practical experiment. She practices us first on simple dishes, being exact as to the manner in which each is to be cooked and served; when we fail she blames gently, and she never forgets to praise when we succeed. Day by day we feel that we are learning, and that heartens us. There is none

of the irritating "let up, let down" system in her house; every rule is strictly enforced, but the rules include provision for our comfort and well-being as well as hers. She explains clearly and kindly why such and such things are prohibited or enforced. We see reason in what she says, and feel that the sway of a friend is over us. By and by sickness comes, or a bad letter from home, and then the mistress proves a real friend. We learn to love her, and our Irish hearts take hold of the new home. Then, and not till then, we become of real use to our employer, and, despite our oft stupidity and occasional tendency to sulk, a comfort and reliance. Other housekeepers marvel and speculate over Mrs. So-and-so's "knack with girls," but we could tell them what it is—simply observance of the old-fashioned golden motto, "Do as you would be done by," or that other, still more golden, "Let every man look not on his own things, but on the things of another."

And this is the moral code for all classes—and all pronouns—not for you and me merely. Not ourselves and yourselves, but likewise for it, for he, and himself, and for herself and—"SHE."

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### *MAIDS AND MISTRESSES.*

IT should be plain enough that examples are as much to servants as to children; since in manners and social training servants are as children. The peasant-girl reared in an Irish cabin or German cottage can hardly be expected to be a model of politeness or of personal neatness. It is quite possible, however, to teach her by example alone. If the mistress be courteous to every member of her family, and they in turn to her, the maid soon feels the atmosphere of good breeding, and unconsciously becomes amiable and respectful. But let the mistress speak sharply to her husband, or scold the children in public, or let the master constantly find fault in the



presence of the servant, and she will shortly discover that courtesy is not one of the essentials of the establishment, and will, most likely, add black looks and uncivil words to the general disharmony. Servants being imitative, there is more reason that the conduct of employers be worthy of imitation. If the mistress of a house be careful of her dress, her speech, her daily habits, her handmaid will, in all probability, grow more careful of her own. But the woman who comes to her breakfast-table with disheveled hair and rumpled gown, has no right to find fault with the maid for attending the door-bell in a dirty calico and slovenly shoes. Like mistress like maid, as well as like master like man. Unless a good example be set, there is no cause to complain of servants for following a bad one. As a rule they are ready to learn, though they may be dull and slow of comprehension. They would rather improve their condition than degrade it. They would rather be ladies than servants. Their ignorance makes them mistake the false for the true, the bad for the good. If every mistress would take pains to set a fair example to her maids, and aid them, now and then, by timely and delicate hints, she would soon have servants who would be, in fact, the help they are in name.

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## PART II. BOOKS AND EDUCATION.

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### *A TASTE FOR READING.*

MANY years ago an enthusiastic girl, whose name you never heard, deliberately set out to "improve her mind." Blindly and secretly groping about for the best way, she stumbled upon various maxims for the guidance of earnest young souls, and putting them all together, she adopted for herself a set of rules intended to correct all her faults and complete her education, and of which I will tell you only those which were to direct her reading. The first required her to rise at five o'clock, retire to a cold room in the third story, and read for two hours in some "solid" work; and the second, never to read a second sentence until she understood the first.

Dear me! I see her now, poor struggling soul! wrapped in a shawl, eyes half open, poring over "Finney's Theology," the most solid book in her father's library. No one can ever know the tough wrestles she had with the "Theory of Divine Government," and "Moral Obligation," nor the faithfulness with which she adhered to the second rule, of understanding each sentence—which often resulted, by the way, in limiting her reading to a single half-page in a morning.



"WHEN YOU'RE WRITING OR READING OR SEWING, IT'S RIGHT  
TO SIT, IF YOU CAN, WITH YOUR BACK TO THE LIGHT."





Have *you* found out that you know very little?—that books are full of allusions totally dark to you? Have you learned that graduating, even at a college, will not complete your education? Do you long for cultivation? Then to you I hold out my hands. Let us see if we cannot avoid the rocks that have wrecked so many honest endeavorers besides the girl of that far-off day with her Theology.

For the first and greatest of these rocks—you will attempt too much. You will wake up to your needy condition suddenly, perhaps, and looking over the biography of Franklin, or some one else who lived by rule,—or at least made rules to live by,—you will, if you 're an earnest soul, lay out for yourself such a code of laws, mental, moral, and physical, as an aged philosopher would find hard to live by. Eagerly you will begin, and faithfully carry them out for a while; but human nature is weak, enthusiasm will die out, your lapses from rules will become more frequent, and you will fall back into the old careless life, discouraged; perhaps resume your novel-reading, and never advance beyond the shallow life you see about you and find so easy.

My dear girl, don't be so hard with yourself. Don't expect to jump from light novels to Carlyle, and to relish his bracing atmosphere. Do not begin with a book that requires the close attention of a student, and force yourself to read, yawning, with wandering mind and closing eyes. Do not open a dry history, beginning at the first chapter, resolved to read it through anyway. Never stint your sleep, nor freeze nor starve yourself. All these are worse than useless; they discourage you. A taste for solid reading must be cultivated, and books that are tedious at thirteen may be lamps to your feet at forty.

There is an easier and better way. You need not despair of acquiring an interest in instructive reading, even if you have always read novels, have little time at your disposal, or have reached the age of gray hairs. It is never too late to begin to cultivate yourself.

Do not lay out in detail a "course of reading." Probably you would not follow it, and the moral effect of making a plan

and giving it up is injurious. But there is another reason for my advice. When you become interested in a subject, *then* is the time to follow it up, and read everything you can get hold of about it. What you read when thus keenly interested you will remember and make your own, and that is the secret of acquiring knowledge: to study a thing when your mind is awake and eager to know more. No matter if it leads you away from the book with which you set out; and if it sends you to another subject, so that you never again open the original book, so much the better; you are eager, you are learning, and the object of reading is to learn, not to get through a certain number of books.

"What we read with inclination," said wise old Dr. Johnson, "makes a strong impression. What we read as a task is of little use."

When you read a book that interests you, you naturally wish to know more of its author. That is the time to make his acquaintance. Read his life, or an account of him in an encyclopedia; look over his other writings, and become familiar with him. Then you have really added something to your knowledge. If you fettered yourself with a "course," you could not do this, and before you finished a book, you would have forgotten the special points which interested you as you went through.

You think that history is dull reading, perhaps. I'm afraid that is because you have a dull way of reading it, not realizing that it is a series of true and wonderful stories of men's lives, beyond comparison more marvelous and interesting than the fictitious lives we read in novels. The first pages are usually dry, I admit, and I advise you not to look at them till you feel a desire to do so; but select some person, and follow out the story of his life, or some event, and read about that, and, I assure you, you will find a new life in the old books.

After getting, in this way, a fragmentary acquaintance with a nation, its prominent men and striking events, you will doubtless feel anxious to know its whole story, and then, reading it with interest, you will remember what you read.

But there are other subjects in which you may be interested. You wish first to know about the few great books and authors generally regarded and referred to as the fountains-heads of the world's literature.

There are many well-known and often-quoted authors, concerning whom you will wish to be informed, even if you never read their works. You want to know when they lived and what they wrote. The world of books is too large for any one to know thoroughly; you must select from the wide range what suits your taste, and be content to have an outside, or title-page, knowledge of the rest.

Above all, in your reading you want to avoid becoming narrow and one-sided. Read both sides of a question. If you read a eulogistic biography of a person, read also, if possible, one written from an opposite stand-point. You will find that no one is wholly bad, nor wholly good, and you will grow broad in your views.

But perhaps you don't know how to read by subjects. Let me tell you. Suppose you see an allusion to something that interests you—say Sir Walter Raleigh; look for his name in an encyclopedia or biographical dictionary (which you will find in every tolerable village library). Reading of him, you will become interested in Queen Elizabeth; look her up, in the same books, and in English history; observe the noted men of her reign, look them up, read their lives; read historical novels and poems of her times; look at the table of contents of magazines and reviews, and read essays on the subject. You see the way open before you. Once make a start, and there is scarcely an end to the paths you will wish to follow.

If you have no special subject of interest, take up an encyclopedia, slowly turn the leaves, and read any item that attracts you, not forcing yourself to read anything. If you have any life in you, you will find something to interest you; then you have your subject. If it is some historical person or event, proceed as I have already indicated; if scientific, overhaul the dictionaries of science, lives of scientific men, dis-

cussions of disputed points, etc.; if geographical, turn to a gazetteer, books of travels, etc. One book will lead to another.

Right here let me say, I hope you have access to these works of reference, either in your own house, or that of a friend, or at a public library. But if your case is the very worst—if you have none, cannot buy them, and have no public library in your neighborhood, let me advise you to drop everything else, and make it your sole and special mission to start one, either by influencing your parents and older friends, or by getting up a club of your mates. A strong will and earnest effort will accomplish wonders, and all older people are willing to help younger ones to useful tools.

To return to your reading. Your memory is bad, perhaps—every one complains of that; but I can tell you two secrets that will cure the worst memory. One I mentioned above: to read a subject when strongly interested. The other is, to not only read, but think. When you have read a paragraph or a page, stop, close the book, and try to remember the ideas on that page, and not only recall them vaguely in your mind, but put them into words and speak them out. Faithfully follow these two rules, and you have the golden keys of knowledge. Besides inattentive reading, there are other things injurious to memory. One is the habit of skimming over newspapers, items of news, smart remarks, bits of information, political reflections, fashion notes, all in a confused jumble, never to be thought of again, thus diligently cultivating a habit of careless reading, hard to break. Another is the reading of trashy novels. Nothing is so fatal to reading with profit as the habit of running through story after story, and forgetting them as soon as read. I know a gray-haired woman, a life-long lover of books, who sadly declares that her mind has been ruined by such reading.

A help to memory is repetition. Nothing is so certain to keep your French fresh, and ready for use, as to have always on hand an interesting story in that language, to take up for ten minutes every day. In that case, you will not “forget your French” with the majority of your school-mates.



A love of books, dear girls, is one of the greatest comforts in life. No one can be wholly unhappy or solitary who possesses it. From thoughtless youth to hoary age, books are a refreshment for the weary, society for the lonely, helpers for the weak. A taste for good reading is one of the best gifts in the world—better than beauty, almost better than health, and incalculably better than wealth. The pleasures of a comfortably filled mind can never be estimated.

In conclusion, let me beg that whatever you learn in books you will learn thoroughly. Content yourself with no smattering surface acquaintance, but endeavor to thoroughly know and understand your subject, step by step, as you go on. Master one subject, and you have taken a long step toward a broad and cultivated womanhood.

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### *TWO WAYS OF TEACHING AT HOME.*

ONE of the most perplexing hours of the day to the mother is when the children come to be “helped with their lessons.” It is useless for her to acknowledge that she has not kept pace with geography and history, and has forgotten her grammar and arithmetic. She knows that she ought to have kept pace with them; that now and here the mother’s duty calls her to work, and not to matters of frills, petticoats, or new hats. It is just as useless, too, for her to count the sums paid for the children’s schooling, and declare that, after all, she is their teacher. There is no doubting that fact. In all the public schools, and the majority of private ones, the children’s lessons are simply recited in school, and must be studied and explained to them at home. The secret of this is, that very few teachers are in love with teaching. It is the worst paid of all professions; so ill-paid, that it usually serves in the lower grades as a make-shift, a stepping-stone to young

men and women with other aims in view. As long as we pay to our teachers lower wages than to our skilled cooks and seamstresses, we cannot blame them if they cram the children's heads with chaff of words, and leave us to give them the ideas. As we have their work to do, how are we to do it?

There are two ways. Little Mrs. B., a veritable descendant of Gradgrind, drills the children every night in their next day's lesson. She keeps them at work until they can repeat *verbatim* Latin and definitions and Bible texts. She will not bate a jot, neither irregular inflection nor river in Africa. Their eyes ache, and their heads bob, and so do hers; but she holds them down to it, as she would a knife to a grindstone. Phil, who is a dull fellow in ordinary matters, rattles off the words as if they were marbles dropping out of the mill; but that sharp little Bob is at the foot of his class. The words pass through his head like water through a sieve; he declares there is no sense in them. Mrs. B. prognosticates a miserable failure in life for Bob; he is the black sheep of the B. family, and of the school. Whereas the boy is simply lacking in the lowest kind of memory.

His cousins, the Dodd boys, do not rank very much above him. Their mother holds them back; will not let them be "promoted," or dragged through at high-pressure speed from class to class. "Fair and softly!" she says to the principal. "Let us lay the foundations first." The principal thinks Mrs. Dodd a nuisance. He does not like women with opinions of their own. She insisted that the boys should be turned back to simple rules of arithmetic, instead of passing on to algebra. Meanwhile, in the evening she "keeps shop" with them, or market, or bank, provides them with quantities of home-made money, makes them buy, sell, make change, compute accounts, reckon interest, draw checks. She does not call it play; they know it is work; you never can hide a pill by sugar from a boy. But it is pleasanter than meaningless rules. And by and by the signification of the thing flashes on them, the reality, precision, inflexibility of figures, and the modes of handling them.

When they are studying their geography their mother usually is reminded of some odd incident or story which happened in the country to which the lesson relates. It is a very live story; the people wear their native costume; they are busied with their peculiar work. You see the scenery, buildings, feel the climate, as she talks; the boys are with the Tartar on his plain, the lazzaroni in Rome, the *Polaris* drifting over the Arctic Sea. Perhaps they quite fail in naming the peaks of the Andes next day, or the capes on the Pacific coast; but they know a new country; it is not a patch of yellow on the map; they have talked with the people there, and they feel that the winds blowing on their faces come from it.

Mrs. Dodd contrived a queer occupation for the boys when they began English history. For Joe, who has a passion for drawing and daubing in paints, she provided a mammoth blank-book, each enormous page labeled a century. On these Joe drew figures, giving his idea of the people, houses, and state of civilization in that century. You may be sure that Druids and oaks; Boadicea, with her spear and yellow hair; wolves, Alfred and his burned cakes, filled up the first pages with magnificent blotches of color. We confess that his zeal slackened as he came down to civilized times; there were but two or three figures in a century, but their histories were as fixed in his head by his mother's repetition as those of Cinderella, or the great Jack himself. For Will, who had an odd skill in costume and dramatic effect, Mrs. Dodd contrived paper boxes, with the name of the century in great gilt letters. There, by the help of little figures, the Black Prince played his part, and Richard was himself again. The plan, with Mrs. Dodd's other plans, may seem trivial to our readers, as they did to the teacher. "Your facts are nails," she used to say. "Iron nails. I only silver them over, and drive them in."

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*THE CULTIVATION OF LITERARY TASTE  
IN CHILDREN.*

DEAR ———: When I wrote you the other day, I said some things about the various ways in which little children can be educated long before they are old enough to go to school. Their literary taste, also, can be cultivated at a very early age. Now, don't misunderstand me, and say you don't like precocious children, like Macaulay, for instance—for, between you and me, I think he must have been an insufferable little "prig" if he did all the wonderful things his "Life" says he did. Children can learn to like the good things in our literature, and need not be confined to a mental diet of "Mother Goose." Not that I don't believe in "Mother Goose." Nothing ever can take the place of "Boy-Blue" and "Bo-peep." But because children like molasses candy, are they never to have beefsteak and bread? And, *en passant*, let me suggest what an excellent basis "Mother Goose" makes for stories, when a mother's wits fail under the insatiable demands for "a story, a new one, something we have never heard before." Take "Jack Horner"; dress him up in a new name, and, with variations and details innumerable, *à la Susan Coolidge*, make a new story. You can even smuggle in a little moral about selfishness if you're skillful, and then end by repeating the immortal verse, and the children's shouts of laughter will repay you for the exercise of your imagination. And here let me whisper what a help such a story is, when you're doing disagreeable things, like washing their ears, or combing snarls out of their hair, at which even good children fret and twist about.

But I was speaking of cultivating a child's literary taste. I know two little girls, aged seven and four, who, quite unconsciously, have made the acquaintance of some of the writings of our best poets, and find great delight in them, and are learning to appreciate good things in a perfectly natural child-like way. The oldest was a very nervous, excitable child; it was almost impossible to quiet her to sleep, and she was very



wakeful at night. When she was about three years old, her mother began reading to her at bed-time some of those pretty little pieces of poetry for children—such as are found in so many collections like “Hymns and Rhymes for Home and School,” “Our Baby,” and the like, and found the rhythm so soothing to the child’s restless nerves, that she committed several to memory, to use when the book was not at hand. She kept the little book or newspaper-scrap in her work-basket, and when she was holding the baby or could do nothing else, she learned a stanza or two. She soon had quite a collection at her tongue’s end, and now it is part of the bed-time routine for mamma to repeat one or two. The little rollicking four-year-old, a perfect embodiment of animal life and spirits, generally calls for Tennyson’s “Sweet and low, wind of the Western sea,” while the older one is charmed by Mary Howitt’s pretty ballad of “Mabel on Midsummer Eve,”—sweet, pure, good English, all of it. I watched the older child, as she stood at the window beside her mother one wild November morning, looking at the dead leaves whirling in the wind, while the mother recited to her Bryant’s lines, “The melancholy days are come.” It was almost as good as the poem to see the child’s gray eyes kindle with appreciation as she eagerly drank in the words. One can see the influence of this culture in the little songs they make up for their dollies,—a jingle and jargon, of course, but interspersed with remembered lines from their “little verses,” and having withal a good deal of rhythm and movement about them. Their ear has been educated to a certain standard of appreciation,—just as German children who grow up in an atmosphere of good music find delight in harmonies which are hardly understood by our less cultivated American ears. Of course, you must carefully select beforehand to suit the children’s minds, and must explain similes and allusions.

On the other hand, if children’s minds are so susceptible to good impressions, they are equally affected by bad ones. A child’s world is made up of the things he has already learned; and these things are conveyed to his mind by what

he has actually seen himself, or by pictures and stories of what he has not seen. His imagination is as quick to supply "missing links" as the most enthusiastic Darwinian. What is n't there ought to be, so it's all right. Whether he lives in a world peopled by distorted, horrible, unnatural objects, or in one full of all lovely and pleasant ones, depends very largely on the pictures he sees and the stories he hears. If his picture-books are of the hideous order, in which a blue-bearded monster holds a sword over an equally horrible pink-and-scarlet woman, you must expect him to wake at night from dreadful dreams, shrieking with terror, and imagining grotesque figures leering at him from every dark corner; and much more so if he is allowed to hear ghost and hobgoblin stories told by superstitious servant-girls. Besides this, if his ideas of art are built upon the basis of a Punch-and-Judy style of picture-books, agents' engravings, or newspaper and tea-store chromos, he must pass through a long course of training before he is capable of knowing what a good picture is, if, indeed, he ever does know. In these days of photographs and beautiful children's books, there is no reason why people of even moderate means should not educate their children into something like a sense of artistic appreciation. Why, you can buy at any print-store a good photograph, neatly framed, of any of the great pictures of the world (the "San Sistine" cherubs, for instance) for a dollar. And yet how many people there are who would spend that money for Hamburg edgings without a thought, but would never dream of buying a good picture to hang on the nursery wall.

Now, I can hear you say with a sigh, "Oh dear! this all takes so much time and thought." Of course it does—so does everything that is good for anything. As to time, you have "all there is"; it depends only upon what you use it for. I feel almost like groaning when a young mother shows me some marvel of embroidery or machine-stitching, saying triumphantly, "There, I did every stitch of that myself!" When will women learn that their time is worth too much, for better things, to be spent upon such trifles? It is really pitiful to

see a good, conscientious little mother resolutely shutting herself away from so much that is best and sweetest in her children's lives, for the sake of tucking their dresses and ruffling their petticoats. How surprised and grieved she will be to find that her boys and girls, at sixteen, regard "mother" chiefly as a most excellent person to keep shirts in order and to make new dresses, and not as one to whom they care to go for social companionship! Yet, before they are snubbed out of it by repeated rebuffs, such as "Run away—I'm too busy to listen to your nonsense," children naturally go to their mothers with all their sorrows and pleasures; and if "mother" can only enter into all their little plans, how pleased they are! Such a shout of delight as I heard last summer from Mrs. Friendly's croquet-ground, where her two little girls were playing: "Oh, goody, goody—mamma is coming to play with us!" She was a busy mother, too, and I know would have much preferred to use what few moments of recreation she could snatch for something more interesting than playing croquet with little children, not much taller than their mallets. She has often said to me, "I cannot let my children grow away from me—I must keep right along with them all the time; and whether it is croquet with the little ones, or Latin grammar and base-ball with the boys, or French dictation and sash-ribbons with the girls, I must be 'in it' as far as I can."

But really the most difficult part of all this is to think of it. We are so preoccupied with our cares and plans that we have n't "the heart at leisure from itself" thus even to sympathize with our children. We brood over Bridget's deficiencies and our plans for trimming Mary's dresses, to say nothing of heavier burdens, till our poor heads are half distracted. Yet if we could only lift ourselves above these thoughts into a clearer atmosphere while we are with the children, we would find ourselves refreshed when we go down into the fogs and mists again. It is the everlasting monotony of our work, the same things over and over every day, that wear upon us mentally quite as much as bodily. If we could only be strong enough

to make our intercourse with the children lift us out of the "ruts" of our dull planning and thinking, this culture of them would be a change and stimulus instead of an additional burden. (A change from saddle to harness often rests the galled horse, you know). We should find ourselves snatching little bits of time to look into encyclopedias and histories to see if our facts are correct; brightening up rusty school-knowledge; perhaps even turning into account our school-girl accomplishments of drawing, and music, and composition; and certainly reading with some thought for the children, which of itself would supply the lack of purpose so usual in women's reading. The little we do is apt to be desultory and unsatisfactory—a hodge-podge of popular novels and the newspaper. We have so little time to read, we say, but we let slip five and ten minute chances, or waste them over some frivolous story, because we have n't or think we have n't any object to stimulate us. Our husbands read and study in the direction of their business or professions, and their minds are constantly sharpened by the necessities of their daily work. Ours, if we are not careful, are narrowed by the necessary and important attention to the detail of housekeeping, till we can talk an hour over the comparative advantages and disadvantages of Irish or colored help, or discuss "knife-plaiting" like philosophers; but beyond that —. Yet, I am confident of my sex's ability, and sure that there are a good many of us who wish for better things, and if we could only once get into the way of it, would find ourselves accumulating knowledge and growing in culture from year to year, and that, too, without having dusty furniture, sour bread, or unmannerly children. Let the desire to cultivate and educate the children be an inspiration, and we'll find ourselves cultivated and educated by the same process.

We shall find some things crowded out of our busy life,—we must have fewer clothes, less trimming, simpler cooking; but the mental furnishing of the family will be so much more complete. Hear what Gladstone says about man's work, and make the application to woman's: "To comprehend a man's life, it is necessary to know, not merely what he does, but also



what he purposely leaves undone. There is a limit to the work that can be got out of a human body or a human brain, and he is a wise man who wastes no energy on pursuits for which he is not fitted; and he is still wiser who, from among the things that he can do well, chooses and resolutely follows the best."

You will perceive that I have said nothing about religious education. I know so well how the joy and beauty of happy Christian living pervades your home that it does not seem necessary. A child cannot grow up in such an atmosphere without being religiously educated, any more than the morning-glory can avoid taking color and beauty from the sunbeams which surround it. In a home like yours, where every one is courteous to every one else,—the children included,—the grace of politeness will become incorporated into a child's nature as a genuine, hearty unselfishness.

Now, don't beguile yourself by thinking, "These things are well enough, but far beyond me now,—when my boy is older I'll begin." Your baby will be in college before you know it. Children have a curious way of growing older every week, and we must take them as well as old Father Time by the "forelock," if we are going to do much with them.

Very sincerely your friend,

MARY BLAKE.

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### OLD FRIENDS.

HERE they are in this old, low book-case, opposite the broad, sunny window—our books.

I do not mean the family books,—poetry, history, novels,—ranged upon the shelves down-stairs, though many of them are my true friends now and will be my true friends always. I am speaking of those which were called, years ago, "The Children's Books," and which I love to-day because I loved

them then. *Our* books—for on many a merry Christmas they came to all of us, to Jeanie, Kate, and me.

Let us see whether any of your friends and mine are the same.

Poor old Robinson Crusoe! I went through much sorrow for him. It was very safe and bright in our parlor, and I, a wee girl, sat close by mother's knee, and listened, with breathless interest, while Kate read his story aloud; but afterward, when I lay in my bed, in the dark, how my heart ached for him!

My dear Swiss Family Robinson! You, in your old worn cover, call up only pleasant memories. Many an anxious thought you gave me, but never a throb of pain. My days on that island were all happy ones, and Fritz, and Jack, and Ernest could hardly have felt more interest than I in Tent House and Falcon's Nest.

Here is Rosamond,—kind, good friend!—and “Sunbeam Stories,” with the real heart's sunshine in them.

How I used to delight in these “Wonderful Tales”! Sometimes when I see a pale flower fading, or one looking as though it had an exquisite secret hidden away in its rosy cup, or, in summer twilight, when a toad goes hopping by in his evening walk, I wish for Hans Christian Andersen to tell me their story. “The Nightingale,” “The Ugly Duck,” “The Little Mermaid”—they haunt my memory like strains of lovely music.

My beautiful, loving Undine, and poor, sad Sintram! Only just now, when the red light shone upon my wall, I thought of the Pilgrim's song.

But we shall not have time to speak of all, though there are many that we might talk over; so let us only take a few which I used to love the best. This book bears on its blank leaf: “Alice; from Father.” Dear father, you little knew what you were bringing to your daughter, on that evening long ago when you brought home “Ministering Children” from town. You brought me happy hours among the green English fields and in the cottages of the villagers, for it was like living in the

beautiful quiet country with little Rose and Mercy; pleasant times at the farm with Farmer Smith's family, sympathy in their troubles, and gladness on that glad day when William rode Black Beauty home. More than all, you brought me love for Herbert Clifford and his sister. When, in the still summer night, death came to the sweet young lady at the Hall, I felt as though my best friend, too, were gone. I mourned with the villagers; my heart was very sore for Herbert. I did earnestly resolve that I would be a better girl, that I, too, would try and be a ministering child. If I failed sadly, the fault was in me, not in the pure, sweet book. I would have others read it, and do better.

Do you not love "The Wide, Wide World"? I think some of the best influences of my life were breathed forth from those two faded green volumes. I wonder if you followed Ellen Montgomery through her trials and pleasures with the intense interest that I felt. My life had more sorrow than rejoicing when I was with her; but the happy times were so very happy, and I was content only to be with her, and Alice, and John. Oh! did not Aunt Fortune make your blood boil many times, and did you not always feel a sense of glad release when, in the bright afternoon, the work was at last finished, and Ellen free to speed up the mountain-path to Alice? Do you remember the visit to Mrs. Vawse, the walk home through the snow-storm, and the cheerful gleam of Mr. Van Brunt's lantern? The Bee was as great a novelty to me as to Ellen, and Christmas at Ventnor seemed very pleasant; but the lovely, quiet times at the Parsonage, in the sitting-room with the glass door—they were the happiest.

In those old times, a story had to seem very real to bring the tears to my eyes, but, when the days of trouble came, I did cry with Ellen. I could not bear to have Alice die. The white house seemed very desolate without her. When the bitterness of many partings had been gone through, and Ellen was far away in Scotland, I, too, was homesick and heart-sick to think of the moonlight streaming through the glass door into the empty sitting-room.

My Ellen! I thought I loved you truly. Why did I not love you well enough to follow then in your small footprints, copy then your gentleness and patience, and try to do my duty as well as you did yours?

This worn, brown book in the corner is one of my truest friends. I never look at it without wishing that I were braver and better. I am sure you love it just as well as I; I am sure you gave Tom Brown your warm and ready sympathy through all those "School Days," dark and bright. Through the perils and adventures which he and Harry East shared together, through the trials and victories of that better time, when, thanks to the Doctor and Arthur, "the tide turned," and Tom took the side of Right, up to the chapter in which, the brave and worthy captain of the Eleven, he plays his last match at Rugby. And were you not truly glad that he grew up such a noble fellow? Did it not give you a tender and reverent admiration for Doctor Arnold? Did you not sincerely thank Thomas Hughes for writing such a book?

Sometimes, when everything seems to be going wrong, and I feel tired and discouraged, if I chance to pass by the book-case, I stop and open the brown doors, and look, for a moment, at my friends standing quietly there. I need not take down a single volume; the old backs speak to me. The beautiful old days come back to me. The voices that whispered to me then of lovely, lofty things, breathe to me now encouragement and cheer: "Be strong! Try again to be good." And I go down-stairs, feeling comforted.

Dear, I want to say something to you. You read many books—Mrs. Whitney's, Miss Alcott's, and numberless others. If you would receive from them the good they have to give you, take the lessons they teach to yourself, into your own heart. *Be* good and pure, like Faith Gartney; unselfish, like Leslie Goldthwaite; true to what you know to be right, like the Marches. Struggle with your faults as bravely as Tom Brown fought his school-foes first and his temptations afterward. It is, it must be, a struggle; but you can, if you *will*.



Then, when you stand some day, as I do, before your old books, it will be with no sad thought of what might have been, if you had carried out the good impulses they awakened; but gladly, gratefully, saying: "They were true friends. They helped me to be good."

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### *THE HABIT OF READING.*

"I HAVE no time to read," is the common complaint, and especially of women, whose occupations are such as to prevent continuous book perusal. They seem to think, because they cannot devote as much attention to books as they are compelled to devote to their avocations, that they cannot read anything. But this is a great mistake. It is n't the books we finish at a sitting which always do us the most good. Those we devour in the odd moments, half a dozen pages at a time, often give us more satisfaction, and are more thoroughly digested, than those we make a particular effort to read. The men who have made their mark in the world have generally been the men who have in boyhood formed the habit of reading at every available moment, whether for five minutes or five hours.

It is the habit of reading rather than the time at our command that helps us on the road to learning. Many of the most cultivated persons, whose names have been famous as students, have given only two or three hours a day to their books. If we make use of spare minutes in the midst of our work, and read a little, if but a page or a paragraph, we shall find our brains quickened and our toil lightened by just so much increased satisfaction as the book gives us. Nothing helps along the monotonous daily round so much as fresh and striking thoughts, to be considered while our hands are busy. A new idea from a new volume is like oil which reduces the

friction of the machinery of life. What we remember from brief glimpses into books often serves as a stimulus to action, and becomes one of the most precious deposits in the treasury of our recollection. All knowledge is made up of small parts, which would seem insignificant in themselves, but which, taken together, are valuable weapons for the mind and substantial armor for the soul. "Read anything continuously," says Dr. Johnson, "and you will be learned." The odd minutes which we are inclined to waste, if carefully availed of for instruction, will, in the long run, make golden hours and golden days that we shall be ever thankful for.

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### *A WOMAN'S THOUGHTS UPON THE EDUCATION OF WOMEN.*

AS representatives of this wonderful century we are perpetually congratulating ourselves—in Pharisee fashion—upon our superiority. We find ourselves looking back upon the past of our grandmothers with a compassion not untouched by scorn. It is not so much that we are holier than they—for holiness is, perhaps, just a trifle old-fashioned—but that we are so much wiser!

Our civilization has, indeed, carried us forward with gigantic strides in material things; we have thousands of comforts, and luxuries, and even advantages undreamed of by our grandmothers; but the stern question which circumstances, now and again, put to us is not merely: What do we possess? But rather: What are all these vast advantages making of us—individually and collectively? In the rush and struggle to *have*, are we not often losing sight of the old-fashioned virtue which resides in *being*?

The most favorable conditions are not always, nor even generally, the softest. That physical regimen which develops the largest normal amount of *threw* and *sinew*, which pro-

duces the soundest physique and the steadiest nerves, is the best. In just the same way, it is neither the large amount nor the delicate quality of our mental nutriment which is going to make of us a race of intellectual giants.

The education of boys and young men is undoubtedly less one-sided and narrowing now, than it was a hundred years ago. The introduction into school and college courses of the physical and natural sciences has, to a certain extent, displaced the classics. However essential a classical education may be, both because of the information and the discipline which it affords, the almost exclusive pursuit of such studies is undoubtedly stultifying. There has been a great multiplication of studies even in boys' schools, it is true; but there is about a properly constituted boy a healthy animalism which enables him to resist the forcing process so unmercifully used by the educators of the present day.

With girls, the case is very different. The system bears more heavily, and the power of resistance is less. A girl, with a slighter muscular development, a more delicate nervous organization, is expected in four years to cover very nearly the same ground which is gone over by a boy in eight. The text-books, it is true, are not so difficult, and the course is less advanced; but when girls' "accomplishments" are counted in, the *number of subjects* is about the same.

The consequence of all this is that a girl's study is far more superficial. Few teachers of experience will deny that while a bright girl will work harder and recite better than a boy of the same intelligence, the boy is far less easily satisfied with a mechanical way of learning.

A lady who had had much experience in teaching both boys and girls, speaking of the extraordinary obtuseness of a certain pupil, said:

"In a physiology class, this young lady of fifteen inquired with languid surprise, 'Is there not a straight passage through the head from one ear to the other?'—a somewhat natural conclusion," the teacher commented dryly, "if she had ever watched the processes of her own mind."

"Which would you prefer teaching," asked a visitor,—  
"boys or girls?"

"Boys, infinitely," was the prompt reply. "No boy, for instance, would ever have asked such a question as *that*. He would long before have investigated the subject with a lead-pencil. Not, probably, in his own ears," she added, meditatively, "but in his younger brother's."

The education of a girl is supposed to be finished when she is about eighteen. This makes it necessary that the heaviest pressure shall be brought to bear upon her just when she is growing most rapidly; and when her physical system requires the most favorable conditions. The dangers of this high-pressure method do not lie so much in over-stimulation of the brain as in physical and nervous depression, with an abnormal distention of the memory, at the expense of the thinking powers.

If the public mind could once be dispossessed of the stupid notion that education is a mere filling of the mind with facts and theories, and return to the noble old Greek idea of the gymnasium, there would be some hope of a radical reform. With boys this old notion is necessarily retained in a modified form: a boy is making ready for the battle of life. Whatever he learns either directly bears upon his chosen calling, or else indirectly by developing him and making a man of him, so that he may be strong at all points. But school, as affording a course of "training" for a girl, is an idea almost ludicrous. Girls go to school, not to be developed into reasonable, thinking beings, but to have a certain amount of information imparted to them, or, rather, "crammed" into them.

The most vigorous mind can assimilate only a limited amount of mental nutriment in a given time. When too large a quantity is forced into the mind, the effect is analogous to that of overeating. The powers are overtaxed, and even the normal amount of nourishment is not healthfully and comfortably appropriated.

As a matter of fact, do not our girls "go through" all the sciences, and some of the arts; in their last three or four years



at school do not they study literature, rhetoric, logic, and political economy ; natural, mental, and moral philosophy ; physiology, chemistry, botany, geology, and astronomy ; geometry, algebra, and perhaps the trigonometries ; and with this one or two languages, and at least one accomplishment ? And yet, three years after she has left school, who ever expects from an ordinary young woman a sane opinion upon any subject connected with any of these topics ? The enormous mass has either never been taken in at all, or else it has been somehow gotten rid of, and the mind is in a state of collapse. Some women do survive the course, and come out with their thinking powers not quite destroyed ; but that is due to an exceptional vigor of mental constitution, and in spite of their teaching, rather than because of it.

The fact that the majority of women teachers teach simply because they must do something, and can do nothing else so "lady-like," is left out of the account. The system, even with good, honest teaching, is a process of stultification. It ignores every law of growth and development ; it is founded on a false notion of the nature and end of education ; and thus is working toward a mistaken end by unwisely chosen means. These strictures apply to the ordinary private-school system. Public schools, looking toward some practical application of what is taught, attempt less, and do what they attempt more thoroughly.

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### *EDUCATION IN EUROPE.*

WE are forced, in this latter day of dawning American perception in the matter of culture, to compare the qualities which distinguish educated people at home and abroad, for we have, in the United States, so far left behind the primitive simplicity of our stay-at-home ancestors as to covet a place among the polished circles of the polite world.

I do not refer to the "great unwashed," which is about the same all Christendom over—perhaps a trifle better informed

in Germany and the United States than elsewhere. But in our so-called upper classes, there is a restless movement toward something like the broad, easy cosmopolitanism of refined Europeans. It is a conceded fact that Americans, away from home influences, lose their provincialisms more quickly than most other people, probably because there is less force of gravity of dead-and-gone generations drawing them to their established centers. But this assimilation is often only in the mere superficial things of dress and manners, and as a nation we do not adopt the spirit of foreign languages as do Germans and Russians, or even Englishmen. Those last, it is true, speak the acquired tongues with that omnipresent English inflection which every American hopes to carry across the ocean for the amusement of his friends, but always finds he has lost on the steamer, and cannot possibly recover until he has again landed in Liverpool.

Now, this failing of Americans to grasp practically a foreign tongue can be nothing more than the result of a mistaken course of instruction. The education of the English girl so far differs from that of her overworked and under-taught transatlantic cousin, that I have been led to make the contrast a subject of much observation.

For this reason, as well as to vitalize my poor pretense of American French, I entered as pupil one of the charming *pensionnats* in Geneva. Perhaps nothing can so far go to prove the reality of the advantages opened by the European system as a brief sketch of life at Bois de Fey. I write, not from a gushing school-girl's stand-point, but from mature insight, as well as a critical analysis of results. The name of this school—if such one must call it, for want of a better English word—I should like to write in letters of gold for American girls to whom fortune has given the better part of “a finishing year” abroad, although it is but one of many such happy institutions on the Continent.

To begin with, we number in our merry family four English girls, sweet and serious and honest; two or three Americans, whose chief disadvantage is in knowing less French than

most of the others; several Germans, who acquire the language with astonishing rapidity and speak it with great flexibility; several French girls, all vivacity and excitability, after the manner of their nation; one little girl from Bombay and one from Java, the complement being made up of Swiss. A heterogeneous family, but in an enviable state of assimilation. To say they are the happiest young people, out of their own homes, that I have ever seen, would give but an inadequate idea of their contentment. Perhaps, in contrast with the compulsory and monotonous school routine of American girls, they have too much liberty and make too little effort. At least, so it seemed to me at first. They were always in the garden, or on half-duty, I thought. But, now that I have fallen in with the varied round of occupations, I find that the demoiselles, for the most part, work quite as hard as though under stricter orders, and with this to us unknown difference: they study from pure interest in their subjects. To be sure, Mademoiselle gives a *jeton* for every correct answer, or bright idea, or careful translation, or success in composition, during the admirable two hours devoted to recitations. But it is not a spirit of emulation which makes students at Bois de Fey. I look back to the trials of my school-girlhood, and to some later experiences in the deep, narrow rut of a bleak New England boarding-school, and believe that there is nothing in America like these two morning hours in the cheerful *salle d'étude* at Bois de Fey.

Around the long table (or some supplementary small tables, drawn cozily up) sit the girls, with their knitting or crocheting, or any light work which occupies the fingers without claiming the attention. At the head of the table, with the lesson-books for the day open before her, is Mademoiselle. After a chapter from the Bible and a simple prayer, which elevate this French Protestant school far above many of the fashionable academies in the United States, there is a special calling of names from a little blue book, wherein each young lady's name stands opposite to some simple household duty allotted to her, and to be performed before the ringing of the

bell, at ten o'clock. One is to dust the pianos, one to arrange the flowers, one to see that the fire is properly replenished, one to look after the games that are to be replaced, one to keep the book-shelves in order, etc. These performances being commended or disapproved, the exercises begin.

First, there are several rounds of spelling; then synonyms are demanded for the words,—both excellent discipline in aiding the foreigner to acquire a French vocabulary. Then sentences are read, or improvised, in which the same words are employed,—and they must be well employed to please the fastidious ear of Mlle. P. This leads naturally into grammar and composition, after which comes an entertaining lecture on geology, botany, or physiology from Mademoiselle, whose French is pure and fluent, and who requires well-expressed notes written upon her remarks. The history and literature of different countries follow, and a few rapid rounds of general questions close the recitations. Of course there is a German teacher for the French and English girls, an English class for the German and French girls, and a master of mathematics for all. But the charm of the home is the liberal instruction of its kind and cultivated mistress.

But there are other methods of educating girls in Europe which are even farther removed from the “mechanical way of learning” prevalent in American schools. Perhaps nothing appears, upon first view, more superficial and nomadic than the course pursued by many an English mother in the “training” of her daughters. And yet the English girl whom one encounters everywhere in Europe is a refreshing example of versatile culture. She is not “crammed,” but is genuinely cultivated. This involves a more liberal process of imparting many-phased information than is possible in our first-class schools where the cramming system is in vogue. I am afraid to turn the leaf back, somewhere prior to my first European experiences, and recall all the things which I studied, in common with sixty or seventy-five other overtaxed young ladies. Although possessed of as many different inclinations or capacities, we were reduced to one striving, indiscriminating mass. All day, and



sometimes half the night, we labored and strove—for what? For perfect recitations and a high standing in our class, at best. I do not believe we ever had a rational conception of why we studied, of the means of cultivation professedly within our reach, or of the use or tendency of any branch of mental application.

It was all one nebulous effort; and the ability to acquire each individual *lesson* was a sort of necromancy which had to be worked by a special evoking of the sensitive and easily excited memory. I do not think we were stupid; but this I know, that most of the information supposed to have been absorbed during the school term each year became in the summer a vague blur of incoherent impressions,—a chaos of irretrievably mixed dialectics and hopelessly misplaced facts.

Ah, well! it is not worth while to call up the slowly vanishing phantoms of buried school-books. Doubtless, every “finished” girl in America experiences the same retrospective amazement in contemplating, from the perihelion of graduating day, the immense “ground” she has gone over in her brief scholastic orbit. Of course there are, here and there, sturdy feminine organizations which, when coupled with clear intellects, come unexhausted from the race. But nearly always the female constitution is incapable of that prolonged nervous strain called by your correspondent “the high-pressure method.”

But these English maidens, who dwell in green pastures of Europe, and lie down by the still waters of culture!—how does their ideal education come to them? By work, assuredly; but also by perpetual variety and refreshing contact.

They often begin life with a French governess at home. When they have outgrown their nurseries, a systematic course of travel and languages follows. Mamma gathers her sons and daughters under her wing and goes to the Continent. Here, perhaps, the girl begins with a good German school, her summer holidays among the mountains of Switzerland or the lakes of Italy being pervaded by a ubiquitous German flavor, induced by the presence of a companion, until she is so thoroughly

acquainted with the language that she can read, write, and speak it,—even think and dream in it. After that, she is polished afresh by a French governess, whose quick ear and eye no English word nor gesture is permitted to escape. A winter in Italy, amid the refining influences of Rome or Florence, it may be, completes this graceful training; and then the maiden is ready to be chaperoned by her capable mamma into a society where her acquired tongues are not dead languages, as they are apt to be in the drawing-rooms of well-bred America.

It seems to me, however, that the school-plan, observed in this Genevan *pensionnat*, is the best; for the governess, with all her personal surveillance, makes a slower impression upon the intelligence than does contact with other young minds in the same strait. To be obliged to recite side by side with French-speaking associates lends a glibness, first from mere imitation, then from habit. And it perpetually stirs up the spirit to renewed energy, as the girl is thrown among all the multiform requirements of a little French world such as this. The speech becomes a part of the occasion. I think this home phase of Bois de Fey will rise before me whenever I hear the diplomatic tongue in America, bringing with it the cozy breakfast freedom, the chatter of lunch, the merriment of the prolonged dinner,—all the pleasant, girlish talk; and, above all, the kind and ever cheerful presence of Mlle. Pradez.

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### THE YOUNG FOLKS' STUDY-HOUR.

WHEN are the children to study their lessons? After school is out and dinner is over there is but little time before dark for them to exercise in the open air, and this exercise should be firmly insisted upon. On the other hand, the mornings are short and dark, and if any home-study is done, it is generally at night. It is this night-study that is bad for the tired bodies and brains, and that brings the nervous manner and the unquiet sleep.

How to help the children so their studying may be a pleasure rather than a constant weariness, becomes a serious question for the most of us. From my own experience, I find the following plan answers well:

Let the children have one hour or more after the gas is lit; but at eight o'clock precisely send them to bed, with the promise that you will call them at six in the morning. Do not allow them to have the waking up on their own minds. This would disturb their sleep, which ought to be free from care. To do away with the darkness and the oppressive stillness of the house before day, rise instantly at the sound of the alarm-clock, light the gas, and put a match to a small lot of wood on the hearth. (My boys take turns in bringing up and arranging this wood the day before, their aim being so to lay the sticks and splinters that they will instantly burn on the application of a lighted match.) When the fire is well under way, call the boys. Expecting light and heat and cheerfulness, they will come down with alacrity,—the only trouble then being to get them dressed, for turning over the logs and picking up the hot coals are more pleasant than pulling on shoes and stockings. The gloomier and colder the morning, the more pleasant it is, and the more hilarious the children become. While they are dressing and playing, get ready a cup of something hot for them to drink. I prefer beef-tea, but I vary it with chocolate or coffee, made five-sixths of boiling milk. Cold milk does not cheer them like something hot. To boil the milk for the coffee or chocolate takes only a few moments. I put the tin cup upon a little fixture called the "Pet," that fits over any common gas-burner, and costs but thirty cents. This will heat without burning or smoking the cup. After they have taken their hot drink and eaten a cracker or two, the boys will be ready for their books. In one hour now they can do more hard work, and do it with more cheerfulness and courage, than at any other time of day.

Now see how little it costs, all this pleasure. For the best hickory-wood I have just paid \$7.25 the cord, \$1.50 for hauling it to the house, \$1.00 for sawing once, and 50 cents for

piling in the cellar. For this morning fire, I had one cord sawed into three pieces, which made its cost \$11.25. As this fire only burns till eight or nine o'clock, the one cord may last the whole winter. Even if it uses two cords, how else can so much comfort be had from so small a sum? I have been told that in New York City hickory-wood can be bought for the same price as pine, because there is so little demand for it. Outside of the cities, the cost of the wood would hardly be a consideration. Even if the use of it lightens the purse, it will just as surely lighten children's hearts and clear their brains.

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### *THE OPEN BOOK.*

ONE of the first things provided for in house-furnishing should be the dictionary. Let it have a stand or table of its own, where nothing ever need be placed upon its open pages. A sloping shelf, either fastened as a bracket to the wall, or, better still, on an upright stem and solid base, will help the little ones to remember not to load it with their valuables. To it every child in the family should be directed for the many little bits of information which they are continually interrupting older people to ask for. A heavy dictionary in a book-case, low down as such heavy books always are, comes to be of little practical use, but a book always lying open, frankly inviting the passer-by to take a sip of knowledge on the wing, as it were, is a perennial fountain of information, and has more to do with developing the real intelligence and mental activity of a family of children than many expensive lessons, and much wearisome study. A first-class unabridged dictionary, besides the spelling, definitions, or derivations of words, contains in its appendix a large and generally unsuspected fund of biographical, geographical, scientific, and literary information. Then there is the small chapter on





“TELL US A STORY ABOUT IT.”



scientific and musical hieroglyphics, and the valuable directions for proof correction. These are especially to be commended, for young writers are often at a loss to know how to correct their proof, and editors and printers are mystified in attempting to follow the corrections.

In spite of the objection that it changes the subject too often, a good dictionary affords wonderfully interesting reading. One curious fact affords a comment upon its use—it is the intelligent, the thinking, the reading people who use dictionaries, and not the ignoramuses.

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### *WHAT OUR BOYS ARE READING.*

FEW gentlemen, who have occasion to visit news offices, can have failed to notice the periodical literature for boys which has been growing up during the last few years. The increase in the number of these papers and magazines, and the appearance, from time to time, of new ones, which, to judge by the pictures, are always worse than the old, seem to indicate that they find a wide market. Moreover, they appear not only among the idle and vicious boys in great cities, but also among school-boys whose parents are careful about the influences brought to bear on their children. No student of social phenomena can pass with neglect facts of this kind—so practical and so important in their possible effects on society.

The writer was confirmed in the determination to examine this literature by happening to observe, last summer, the eagerness with which some of these papers were read, and the apparent familiarity with which they were discussed, by a number of boys, who seemed to be returning from boarding-school, and to belong to families which enjoy good social advantages. The number of copies examined for the present

purpose was not large, but they were taken at random, and from all the different periodicals to be found.

These periodicals contain stories, songs, mock speeches, and negro minstrel dialogues,—and nothing else. The literary material is either intensely stupid, or spiced to the highest degree with sensation. The stories are about hunting, Indian warfare, California desperado life, pirates, wild sea adventure, highwaymen, crimes and horrible accidents, horrors (tortures and snake stories), gamblers, practical jokes, the life of vagabond boys, and the wild behavior of dissipated boys in great cities. This catalogue is exhaustive. There are no other stories. The dialogue is short, sharp, and continuous. It is broken by the minimum of description and by no preaching. It is almost entirely in slang of the most exaggerated kind, and of every variety,—that of the sea, of California, and of the Bowery; of negroes, “Dutchmen,” Yankees, Chinese, and Indians, to say nothing of that of a score of the most irregular and questionable occupations ever followed by men. When the stories even nominally treat of school-life, they say nothing of *school*-life. There is simply a succession of practical jokes, mischief, outrages, heroic but impossible feats, fighting, and horrors, but nothing about the business of school, any more than if the house in which the boys live were a summer boarding-house. The sensational incidents in these stories are introduced by force, apparently for the mere purpose of producing a highly spiced mixture. One of the school stories before us has a “local color” which is purely English, although the names are Americanized. The mixture is ridiculous in the extreme. The hero is the son of a “country gentleman” of Ohio, and comes to school with an old drunkard, “ex-butler” of the Ohio country gentleman, whom he allows to join him, at the Grand Central Depot. This scandalous old rascal is kept in the story, apparently because an old drunkard is either a good instrument or a good victim for practical jokes. The hero goes to dine with a gentleman whose place, near the school, is called the “Priory.” While waiting for dinner he goes out for a stroll in the “Park.” He



rescues a girl from drowning, sends back to school for another suit of clothes, goes out again and takes a ride on a bison, is thrown off, strikes, in falling, a professor, who is fortunately fat enough to break his fall; goes to the "snake house" with the professor, is fascinated by the rattlesnake, which gets loose, seizes the reptile and throws it away after it has bitten through the professor's trowsers—all before dinner. All the teachers, of course, are sneaks and blackguards. In this same story, one of the assistant teachers (usher, he is called) gets drunk and insults the principal, whereupon the latter holds the nozzle, while he directs some of the boys to work a garden pump, and throws water on the assistant, who lies helplessly drunk on the grass,—all of which is enforced by a picture. There is not a decent good boy in the story. There is not even the old type of sneaking good boy. The sneaks and bullies are all despicable in the extreme. The heroes are continually devising mischief which is mean and cruel, but which is here represented as smart and funny. They all have a dare-devil character, and brave the principal's rod as one of the smallest dangers of life. There is a great deal of the traditional English brutality in exaggerated forms. The nearest approach to anything respectable is that *after* another boy has been whipped for mischief done by the hero, the latter tells his friend that they ought to have confessed, but the friend replies with the crushing rejoinder that then there would only have been three flogged instead of one.

Another type of hero very common in these stories is the city youth, son of a rich father, who does not give his son as much pocket-money as the latter considers suitable. This constitutes stinginess on the father's part, although it might be considered pardonable, seeing that these young men drink champagne every day, treat the crowd generally when they drink, and play billiards for a hundred dollars a game. The father, in this class of stories, is represented as secretly vicious and hypocritically pious. In the specimen of this class before us, the young man is "discovered" in the Police Court as a prisoner, whence he is remanded to the Tombs. He has

been arrested for collaring a big policeman, to prevent him from overtaking a girl charged with pocket-picking. He interfered because he judged from the girl's face that she was innocent, and it is suggested, for future development in the story, that she was running away from insult, and that the cry of "stop thief" was to get help from the police and others to seize her. The hero, who is the son of a man worth five millions, and who is in prison under an assumed name, now sends for his father's clerk and demands one thousand dollars, saying that otherwise he will declare his real name and disgrace his family. He gets the money. He then sends for a notorious Tombs lawyer, to whom he gives five hundred dollars. With this sum his release is easily procured. He then starts with his cousin to initiate the latter into life in New York. They go to a thieves' college, where they see a young fellow graduated. His part consists in taking things from the pockets of a hanging figure, to the garments of which bells are attached, without causing the bells to ring. Of this a full-page illustration is given. The two young men then go up the Bowery to a beer-saloon, where the hero sustains his character by his vulgar familiarity with the girl waiters. Next, they hear a row in a side street. They find a crowd collected watching a woman who hangs from a third-story window, while her drunken husband beats and cuts her hands to make her fall. The hero solves this situation by drawing his revolver and shooting the man. As he and his companion withdraw unobserved, the former wards off the compliments of the latter by saying modestly that he could not bear to stand there and see such a crowd looking on, and not knowing what to do, so he just did the proper thing. Next day the hero, meeting the thieves'-college graduate in the corridor of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, agrees to receive and hold for him any booty he may seize in the bar-room; which he does. At night he and his friend go to a disreputable masked ball, where the hero recognizes his father in disguise among the dancers. Securing a place in the same set, during a pause in the dance he snatches the mask from his own face

and his father's at the same moment. This edifying incident is enforced by a full-page illustration. A friend suggests the question, What demon of truthfulness makes the artist put such brutal and vulgar faces on the men? In this class of stories, fathers and sons are represented as natural enemies, and the true position for the son is that of suspicion and armed peace.

Another type of hero who figures largely in these stories is the vagabond boy, in the streets of a great city, in the Rocky Mountains, or at sea. Sometimes he has some cleverness in singing, or dancing, or ventriloquism, or negro acting, and he gains a precarious living while roving about. This vagabond life of adventure is represented as interesting and enticing, and, when the hero rises from vagabond life to flash life, that is represented as success. Respectable home life, on the other hand, is not depicted at all, and is only referred to as stupid and below the ambition of a clever youth. Industry and economy in some regular pursuit, or in study, are never mentioned at all. Generosity does not consist in even luxurious expenditure, but in wasting money. The type seems to be that of the gambler, one day "flush" and wasteful, another day ruined and in misery.

There is another type of boy who sometimes furnishes the hero of a story, but who also figures more or less in all of them. That is the imp of mischief,—the sort of boy who is an intolerable nuisance to the neighborhood. The stories are told from the stand-point of the boy, so that he seems to be a fine fellow, and all the world, which is against him, is unjust and overbearing. His father, the immediate representative of society, executes its judgments with the rod, which again is an insult to the high-spirited youth, and produces on his side either open war, or a dignified retreat to some distant region. Here is a story, for instance, of a boy who was left in charge of a country grocery store. To amuse his leisure, he takes a lump of butter from the stock and greases the platform in front of the store. Several village characters, among them an old maid, the parson, and the squire, come to perform on

this arena for the amusement of the youth and one or two of his friends. While the squire is trying to get up or get off the platform, the owner of the grocery returns, and he and the squire have a fight on the grass-plot over the question whether the grocer greased his own platform or not. Next comes Nemesis in the shape of the boy's father. The conversation between these two and the *denouement* may be worth quoting. In the soliloquy at the end there seems to be a reminiscence of Fisk.

"'James,' said he, 'you are breaking my heart with your incorrigible conduct.'

"'Is dat a chowder-gag?' calmly inquired Jimmy.

"'Slang—slang, always slang!' groaned his father. 'James, will you never reform?'

"'Don't wanter; I'm good enough now.'

"'Think of what you might be—a pattern boy, a ——

"'Brass-bound angel, silver-plated cherub, little tin missionary on rollers,' put in Jimmy, apparently in confidence to a fly on the ceiling.

"'Actually sassing his protector,' the deacon said. 'Oh, James, you wicked son of Belial!'

"'Pop's name was Dennis, and he was a short-haired Cincinnati ham,' indignantly corrected Jimmy. 'I don't know anybody named Belial.'

"'The deacon made a horrified mouth.

"'Will you never hearken in quietude and meekness of spirit to words of reproof and advice?' said he.

"'Darned sight ruther listen to funny stories,' muttered Jimmy.

"'You are hopeless,' sighed the deacon, 'and I shall have to chastise you.'

"'Dat means a week's soreness,' Jimmy reflected; then he changed his tune. 'Let me off this time, dad, and I'll be the best boy you ever saw after dis. Stay in nights, stop chewing tobacco, clean my teeth every morning, and welt the life out of anybody dat wont say their prayers regular and go to church every day in the week.'

"'The deacon nodded his head the wrong way.

"'You can't play that on the old man again,' he said; 'it's lost its varnish, it's played out. Step up, my son.'

"'Unwillingly Jimmy stepped up.

"'In a moment he was stepping up more than ever, for the deacon was pelting him all over with a stout switch, which felt the reverse of agreeable.

"'But finally he was released, and crawled dolefully up to bed.

"'There are things nicer than going to bed at four o'clock on a bright, breezy, fall day, and Jimmy knew so.



“‘This here is getting awful stale,’ he meditated, rolling and tossing in his cot, ‘and you can smother me with fish-cakes if I stand it. I ’m going to run away, and come back to dis old one-hoss town when I ’m a man, in a gold band-wagon with silver wheels and six Maltese mules a-drawing it. Probably the old man will be in the poor-house then, swallerin’ shadow soup with an iron spoon, and it will make him cranky to think dat he did n’t used ter let me have my own way and boss things. Yes, by golly, I ’ll give him the sublime skip.’”

The songs and dialogues are almost all utterly stupid. The dialogues depend for any interest they have on the most vapid kind of negro-minstrel buffoonery. The songs, without having any distinct character, seem often to be calculated to win applause from tramps and rioters. The verse, of all before us, which has the most point to it, is the following. What the point is, requires no elucidation :

“Boss Tweed is a man most talked about now,  
His departure last winter caused a great row;  
Of course we all knew it was not a square game,  
But show me the man who would not do the same.

“When Sweeney, Genet, and Dick Connolly took flight,  
He stood here alone and made a good fight;  
He did wrong, but when poor men were greatly in need  
The first to assist them was William M. Tweed.”

These stories are not markedly profane, and they are not obscene. They are indescribably vulgar. They represent boys as engaging all the time in the rowdy type of drinking. The heroes are either swaggering, vulgar swells, of the rowdy style, or they are in the vagabond mass below the rowdy swell. They are continually associating with criminals, gamblers, and low people who live by their wits. The theater of the stories is always disreputable. The proceedings and methods of persons of the criminal and disreputable classes, who appear in the stories, are all described in detail. The boy reader obtains a theoretical and literary acquaintance with methods of fraud and crime. Sometimes drunkenness is represented in its disgrace and misery, but generally drinking is represented as jolly and entertaining, and there is no suggestion that boys who act as the boys in these stories do ever

have to pay any penalty for it in after life. The persons who are held up to admiration are the heroes and heroines of bar-rooms, concert-saloons, variety theaters, and negro minstrel troupes.

From the specimens which we have examined, we may generalize the following in regard to the views of life which these stories inculcate, and the code of morals and manners which they teach:

The first thing which a boy ought to acquire is physical strength for fighting purposes. The feats of strength performed by these youngsters, in combat with men and animals, are ridiculous in the extreme. In regard to details, the supposed code of English brutality prevails, especially in the stories which have English local color, but it is always mixed with the code of the revolver, and, in many of the stories, the latter is taught in its fullness. These youngsters generally carry revolvers and use them at their good discretion. Every youth who aspires to manliness ought to get and carry a revolver.

A boy ought to cheat the penurious father who does not give him as much money as he finds necessary, and ought to compel him to pay. A good way to force him to pay liberally, and at the same time to stop criticising his son's habits, is to find out his own vices (he always has some) and then to levy black-mail on him.

Every boy, who does not want to be "green" and "soft," ought to "see the elephant." All fine manly young fellows are familiar with the actors and singers at variety theaters, and the girl waiters at concert-saloons.

As to drinking, the bar-room code is taught. The boys stop in at bar-rooms all along the street, swallow drinks standing or leaning with rowdy grace on the bar. They treat and are treated, and consider it insulting to refuse or to be refused. The good fellows meet every one on a footing of equality—above all in a bar-room.

Quiet home life is stupid and unmanly. Boys brought up in it never know the world or life. They have to work hard

and to bow down to false doctrines which parsons and teachers, in league with parents, have invented against boys. To become a true man, a boy must break with respectability and join the vagabonds and the swell mob.

No fine young fellow, who knows life, need mind the law, still less the police. The latter are all stupid louts. If a boy's father is rich and he has money, he can easily find smart lawyers (advertisement gratis) who can get the boy out of prison, and will dine with him at Delmonico's afterward. The sympathies of a manly young fellow are with criminals against the law, and he conceals crime when he can.

Whatever good or ill happens to a young man, he should always be gay. The only ills in question are physical pain or lack of money. These should be borne with gayety and indifference, but should not alter the philosophy of life.

As to the rod, it is not so easy to generalize. Teachers and parents, in these stories, act faithfully up to Solomon's precept. When a father flogs his son, the true doctrine seems to be that the son should run away and seek a life of adventure. When he does this he has no difficulty in finding friends, or in living by his wits, so that he makes money, and comes back rich and glorious, to find his father in the poor-house.

These periodicals seem to be intended for boys from twelve to sixteen years of age, although they often treat of older persons. Probably many boys outgrow them and come to see the folly and falsehood of them. It is impossible, however, that so much corruption should be afloat and not exert some influence. We say nothing of the great harm which is done to boys of that age, by the nervous excitement of reading harrowing and sensational stories, because the literature before us only participates in that harm with other literature of far higher pretensions. But what we have said suffices to show that these papers poison boys' minds with views of life which are so base and false as to destroy all manliness and all chances of true success. How far they are read by boys of good home influences we are, of course, unable to say. They

certainly are within the reach of all. They can be easily obtained, and easily concealed, and it is a question for parents and teachers how far this is done. Persons under those responsibilities ought certainly to know what the character of this literature is.

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### *HINTS ON EDUCATION.*

AS a child grows older, and his intellectual nature begins to wake up, his endless "why?" and "what for?" are the keys with which he unlocks the hidden treasures of the strange world he has come to live in. As Tennyson says:

"In children a great curiousness is well  
Who have themselves to learn, and all the world."

I doubt if we always think of that when their irrepressible curiosity drives us almost distracted. When he comes running to you with some queer thing or other he has found, or asks you why you do this or don't do that, you may be sure that his perceptive faculties are beginning to stir themselves. Tire-some as his questions are, they show that his mind is wide-awake and ready to receive on that subject at least. A question he asks you, all eagerness to hear your answer, is worth twenty you ask him sometime when he does n't care a fig about it. Parents often persistently snub their children and "shut them up" for six or eight years, and then wonder why teachers never can get them to "open out" again. "Such teachers!" they say; "the children don't take the least interest in their lessons," never thinking that they did their best to take all the edge off their minds before they sent them to school to be "sharpened up." Even if the subject is one quite beyond your boy, and he can't understand your answer very well, the fact that he knows something about it will prepare his mind for a clearer understanding of it the next time he meets it. Of



course, it is of the first importance that your explanation shall be correct as far as it goes. Besides this, it is a source of great comfort to a child to feel that his parents care enough about what interests him to talk with him about it. May not the decrease of confidence which parents complain of in their grown-up children have its beginnings in the days of childhood, when neither father nor mother could spend time to answer their questions, and other people did?

In addition to teaching him about the things he naturally notices himself, you wish to show him how to keep his eyes and ears open to everything about him. His senses are his teachers, and the things he sees and touches are what interest him first. If his senses can be trained to accurate and constant observation, he has the elements of education in himself, whether he has the advantages of the schools or not. He will always

“Find tongues in trees, books in the running brooks.”

This can be done in a great many ways, varying according to the tastes and mental capacity of the children as well as the different circumstances and talents of the mother. For instance, a mother is out with her children for a walk in the country, wheeling the baby's carriage. The children spy some flowers growing by the road-side, and ask in eager child-fashion, “Oh! what's that, mamma?” It is very natural and easy to say, “Oh! don't touch it—it's nothing but a horrid weed—perhaps it's poisonous.” The children's interest is dulled at once, and they run on, presently finding something else. The answer this time is, “That's a thistle; don't try to pick it—you'll prick your fingers.” And so the mother trudges along, wearily thinking over her plans for to-morrow's breakfast, or wondering if her last year's traveling-suit would “make over” for a school dress for Susie, while the children go frolicking here and there, getting into mischief, and, very likely, having a scolding before they get home, and all gaining nothing from their walk except the freshness which physical exercise and pure air bring to us in spite of ourselves. Now,

suppose she says, as the children bring her the flower: "Why, that 's a Scotch thistle; how did you manage to get it without pricking your fingers?"—an implied commendation of the child's skill which he likes as well as you the praise of your canned strawberries ("Hardly any one succeeds in keeping the real fruit flavor, you know"). The mother goes on to say: "See the pretty, soft purple color, with all those 'prickers' around it, like soldiers guarding a beautiful queen. Do you notice how each flower, as you call it, is made of a great many little flowers? And there 's one gone to seed. Get it, Charlie, if you can, and let 's look at it." Now, the children's interest is wide-awake, and they ask a whole bookful of questions. Baby, in her carriage, begins to be impatient at the interruption of her ride. "Let 's walk along, and I 'll tell you a story about it." So the mother tells how once, when the English army was creeping up at night to surprise the sleeping Scotch, a barefooted soldier stepping on a thistle alarmed the camp with his cry of pain, and the enemy were driven back in defeat, and how the Scotch, in memory of the event, adopted the thistle as their national emblem. The children enjoy the mother's interest in what has interested them; she, in her turn, is refreshed by the change of thought from her ordinary cares; and they all come home invigorated mentally as well as bodily.

Perhaps some day, in years to come, bending wearily over school-books, the child reads the incident of the thistle in his history, and as a flash of lightning illuminates a room at midnight, the whole scene stands out in his memory—the green-bordered road-side, the warm, level rays of the late afternoon sun touching the spires and roofs of the distant city, his little sister in her carriage, his mother's smile and voice; and the whole lesson is brightened by this reflection from his boyhood. In ways like these you can bind yourself with silken cords about his future. From what wrong and wickedness in his restless youth and early manhood little memories like these may beguile him, you cannot tell.

To advance a step farther from the realm of simple sight and touch, there are many historical stories which are as fasci-

nating as fairy tales; for instance, King Alfred and the burnt cakes, Columbus seeing the light on the shore after his three weary days of watching, or Washington crossing the Delaware. These things, once committed to a child's memory, are never "dropped out" as so much later acquirement is, and they will serve as pegs to hang historical knowledge on hereafter, or as centers around which he will naturally group other facts. One such story will make a whole reign or epoch seem real to him. You ought so to instruct your child that he will find, when he begins to study, that he knows a great many things about history, geography, and the physical sciences even, which he never can remember not to have known, nor where he learned them; but there they are—a fertile subsoil for other seeds to grow in.

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### *A FAMILY JOURNAL.*

**I**N a certain farm-house, twenty years ago, a great blank-book was kept, and labeled "Home Journal." Every night somebody made an entry in it. Father set down the sale of the calves, or mother the cutting of the baby's eye-tooth; or, perhaps, Jenny wrote a full account of the sleighing party last night; or Bob the proceedings of the Phi Beta Club; or Tom scrawled, "Tried my new gun. Bully. Shot into the fence and Johnson's old cat."

On toward the middle of the book there was an entry of Jenny's marriage, and one of the younger girls had added a description of the brides-maids' dresses, and long afterward there was written, "This day father died," in Bob's trembling hand. There was a blank of many months after that.

But nothing could have served better to bind that family of headstrong boys and girls together than the keeping of this book. They come back to the old homestead now, men and women with grizzled hair, to see their mother, who is still

living, and turn over its pages reverently, with many a hearty laugh, or the tears coming into their eyes. It is their childhood come back again in visible shape.

There are many other practical ways in which home ties can be strengthened and made more enduring for children, and surely this is as necessary and important a matter in the management of a household as the furnishing of the library or chambers in good taste, or the accumulation of bric-à-brac. One most direct way is the keeping of anniversaries; not Christmas, Easter, nor the Fourth of July alone, but those which belong to that one home alone. The children's birthdays, their mother's wedding-day, the day when they all came into the new home. There are a hundred cheerful, happy little events which some cheerful and happy little ceremony will make a life-long pleasure. The Germans keep alive their strong domestic attachments by just such means as these; it seems natural and right to their children that all the house should be turned topsy-turvy with joy at Vater or Mutter's Geburtstag; while to the American boy or girl it is a matter of indifference when his father and mother were born. We know a house in which it is the habit to give to each servant a trifling gift on the anniversary of their coming into the family; and, as might be expected, these anniversaries return for many years. Much of the same softening, humanizing effect may be produced by remembering and humoring the innocent whims and peculiarities of children. Among hard-working people it is the custom too often to bring up a whole family in platoons, and to marshal them through childhood by the same general inflexible rules. They must eat the same dishes, wear the same clothes, work, play, talk, according to the prescribed notions of father and mother. When right or wrong is concerned, let the rule be inexorable; but when taste, character, or stomach only is involved, humor the boy. Be to Tom's red cravat a little blind; make Will the pudding that he likes, while the others choose pie. They will be surer of your affection than if you sentimentalized about a mother's love for an hour. Furthermore, do not grow old yourself too soon. Buy



chess-boards, dominoes, bagatelle; learn to play games with the boys and girls; encourage them to ask their friends to dinner and tea, and take care that your dress and the table be pretty and attractive, that the children may be ashamed of neither.

“Why should I stay at home in the evening?” said a lad the other day. “Mother sits and darns stockings, or reads Jay’s Devotions; father dozes, and Maggy writes to her lover. I’ll go where I can have fun.” Meanwhile, father and mother were broken-hearted because Joe was “going to ruin,” which was undoubtedly the fact.

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### *HOW TO KEEP A JOURNAL.*

AUTUMN is as good a time as any for a boy or girl to begin to keep a journal. Too many have the idea that it is a hard and unprofitable task to keep a journal, and especially is this the case with those who have begun, but soon gave up the experiment. They think it is a waste of time, and that no good results from it. But that depends upon the kind of journal that you keep. Everybody has heard of the boy who thought he would try to keep a diary. He bought a book, and wrote in it, for the first day, “Decided to keep a journal.” The next day he wrote, “Got up, washed, and went to bed.” The day after, he wrote the same thing, and no wonder that at the end of a week he wrote, “Decided not to keep a journal,” and gave up the experiment. It is such attempts as this, by persons who have no idea of what a journal is, or how to keep it, that discourage others from beginning. But it is not hard to keep a journal if you begin in the right way, and will use a little perseverance and patience. The time spent in writing in a journal is not wasted by any means. It may be the best employed hour of any in the day, and a well-kept journal is a source of pleasure and

advantage which more than repays the writer for the time and trouble spent upon it.

The first thing to do, in beginning a journal, is to resolve to stick to it. Don't begin, and let the poor journal die in a week. A journal, or diary, should be written in *every day*, if possible. Now, don't be frightened at this, for you do a great many things every day, and this is n't a very awful condition. The time spent may be longer or shorter, according to the matter to be written up; but try and write, at least a little, every day. "*Nulla dies sine linea*"—no day without a line—is a good motto. It is a great deal easier to write a little every day than to write up several days in one.

Do not get for a journal a book with the dates already printed in it. That kind will do very well for a merchant's note-book, but not for the young man or woman who wants to keep a live, cheerful account of a happy and pleasant life. Sometimes you will have a picnic or excursion to write about, and will want to fill more space than the printed page allows. Buy a substantially bound blank-book, made of good paper; write your name and address plainly on the fly-leaf, and, if you choose, paste a calendar inside the cover. Set down the date at the head of the first page, thus: "Tuesday, October 1, 1881." Then begin the record of the day, endeavoring as far as possible to mention the events in the correct order of time—morning, afternoon, and evening. When this is done, write in the middle of the page, "Wednesday, October 2," and you are ready for the record of the next day. It is well to set down the year at the top of each page.

But what are you to write about? First, the weather. Don't forget this. Write, "Cold and windy," or "Warm and bright," as the case may be. It takes but a moment, and in a few years you will have a complete record of the weather, which will be found not only curious, but useful.

Then put down the letters you have received or written, and, if you wish, any money paid or received. The day of beginning or leaving school; the studies you pursue; visits from or to your friends; picnics or sleigh rides; the books you

have read ; and all such items of interest, should be noted. Write anything that you want to remember. After trying this plan a short time, you will be surprised at the many things constantly occurring which you used to overlook, but which now form pleasant paragraphs in your book. But don't try to write something when there is nothing to write. If there is only a line to be written, write that, and begin again next day.

Do not set down about people anything which you would not wish them to see. It is not likely that any one will ever see your writing, but it is possible, so always be careful about what you write. The Chinese say of a spoken word that, once let fall, it cannot be brought back by a chariot and six horses. Much more is this true of written words, and once out of your possession, there is no telling where they will go, or who will see them.

The best time to write in a journal is in the evening. Keep the book in your table-drawer, or on your desk, and, after supper, when the lamps are lighted, sit down and write your plain account of the day. Don't try to write an able and eloquent article, but simply give a statement of what you have seen or done during the day. For the first week or two after beginning a journal, the novelty of the thing will keep up your interest, and you will be anxious for the time to come when you can write your journal. But after a while it becomes tedious. Then is the time when you must persevere. Write something every day, and before long you will find that you are becoming so accustomed to it that you would not willingly forego it. After that, the way is plain, and the longer you live the more valuable and indispensable your journal will become.

But some practical young person asks: What is the good of a journal? There is very much. In the first place, it teaches habits of order and regularity. The boy or girl who every evening arranges the proceedings of the day in systematic order, and regularly writes them out, is not likely to be careless in other matters. It helps the memory. A person who keeps a journal naturally tries during the day to remember things he sees, until he can write them down. Then the

act of writing helps to still further fix the facts in his memory. The journal is a first-class teacher of penmanship. All boys and girls should take pride in having the pages of their journals as neat and handsome as possible. Compare one day's writing with that of the one before, and try to improve every day. Keeping a journal cultivates habits of observation, correct and concise expression, and gives capital practice in composition, spelling, punctuation, and all the little things which go to make up a good letter-writer. So, one who keeps a journal is all the while learning to be a better penman and a better composer, with the advantage of writing original historical and descriptive articles, instead of copying the printed letters and sentences of a writing-book.

But, best of all, a well-kept journal furnishes a continuous and complete family history, which is always interesting, and often very useful. It is sometimes very convenient to have a daily record of the year, and the young journalist will often have occasion to refer to his account of things gone by. Perhaps, some evening, when the family are sitting and talking together, some one will ask: "What kind of weather did we have last winter?" or, "When was the picnic you were speaking of?" and the journal is referred to. But the pleasure of keeping a journal is itself no small reward. It is pleasant to exercise the faculty of writing history, and to think that you are taking the first step toward writing newspapers and books. The writer can practice on different kinds of style, and can make his journal a record, not only of events, but of his own progress as a thinker and writer.

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#### *A LETTER TO LETTER-WRITERS.*

WHEN young people say that they hate to write letters, you may be sure, unless they are very dull and self-centered, that their trouble arises from trying to do a very easy thing in a very difficult way. It is to such as these that I would speak.



As we may safely take it for granted, from the alacrity with which the postman is met at the door, that every one likes to receive letters, it seems to be worth while that boys and girls should learn how to write, with ease and pleasure to themselves, those letters which their friends shall find it a pleasure to read.

Letter-writing is very much a matter of habit, and for that reason it is important that young people should learn early to consider it a pleasant way of communicating thoughts and feelings to their friends, instead of a burdensome task to be got over as quickly as possible.

We often hear people excuse themselves by saying that they have no "gift for writing letters," as though it were something like an ear for music, only accorded to a favored few. But the truth is that any one can write interesting and pleasant letters who will take a little trouble and really persevere in the effort. The grand difficulty in the way is that they are too selfish and too indolent to try. Nothing that is worth anything comes without effort, and if you do not care enough about gratifying your friends to take a little pains for it, you deserve never to receive any letters yourselves.

A few simple rules, carefully observed, will help you over some of the things which you call difficulties. In the first place, *always write distinctly*. It destroys much of the pleasure in receiving a letter if it cannot be read without puzzling out every word. Many an epistle, written on heavy, cream-laid paper, with a monogram at the top, is only an annoyance to the one to whom it is addressed, on account of pale ink and careless handwriting.

Be particular in the matter of dating, giving every item distinctly, and sign the letter with your full name. If this habit is formed, you will not run the risk of losing valuable letters, which cannot be forwarded from the Dead-Letter Office unless accompanied with the full address.

You will find it more easy to reply to a letter soon after you get it than if you neglect it for a few weeks, because you will have the impressions which the first reading made upon

you. Tell your friend when you received the letter which you are answering, and take up the topics in the order in which they naturally come, remembering to answer all the questions which have been asked. Try to think what your friend would like best to hear about, and when you undertake to tell anything, do not leave it half told, but finish the story. People who are not careful about this, often give a false impression without meaning to do so. For instance, one of these careless writers, in giving an account of a fire, simply stated that the house was burned, without giving any qualifications, thus giving the impression that it was entirely consumed, thereby causing a whole family much unnecessary trouble and anxiety, as the actual burning in question was very slight.

Do not consider anything too trivial to write about which you would think worth mentioning in conversation. Writing letters is simply talking upon paper, and your friends will be much more entertained by the narration of little every-day affairs than by profound observations upon topics which you care nothing about.

In writing to very intimate friends, who will be interested in the details of your daily life, it is well sometimes to make your letter a sort of diary—telling something of how you have spent each day since you wrote last; what books you have been reading, what letters you have received from mutual friends, and what you have heard or seen which has interested you.

Write all that you have to say on one subject at once. That is, do not begin to tell about your garden, and then about your school, and then about your garden again; but finish one subject before you begin another. Do not be afraid of using the pronoun *I*. Some people avoid it, and thus give their sentences a shabby and unfinished sound, as "Went to Boston—called on Mrs. Smith." Never apologize for what you write by saying that you do not like to write letters. You would not think it quite polite, in visiting a friend, to say, "I do not like to talk to you, so I shall not say much." Keep the idea before you that you are writing for the sake of giving pleasure to your friend.

When your letter is merely an inquiry, or on a matter of business, the case is different. You then should try to be as brief, concise, and clear as possible. An elaborately drawn-out business letter is as out of place as it is inconsiderate.

"Do not think what to write, but write what you think," is an old rule, and a good one to remember. If you are away from home, it is very selfish not to share your good times with the family by writing frequent letters. You can tell what you are enjoying so much better while it is fresh in your mind than you can after you return, when you may not have leisure to go over the whole ground; and these home letters may be a means afterward of refreshing your own memory, and reminding you of incidents which you would otherwise have forgotten. There are many other things which might be said here, but this will do for the present. A very good rule for letter-writing is the golden one, "Do as you would be done by."

Here are two letters, both written not long ago, which illustrate so well some of the things which I have been saying, that I must give them to you. They remind one of the old story of "Eyes and No Eyes," where one boy saw nothing interesting in a long walk, while his brother, in going over the same ground, saw a great many wonderful things. Fanny wrote with a real desire to give her cousin pleasure, but Ellen wished only to get a disagreeable duty off her mind.

Here is Fanny's letter:

"INGLESIDE, MASS., April 20th, 1876.

"MY DEAR ANNIE: I was very glad to receive your kind letter, which came last Thursday.

"We are very busy just now, as we go to school every day. Aunt Alice is visiting us, and every evening she gives us a short lesson in drawing. We have taken only six, and so have not got on much; but I hope soon to be able to draw from copies pretty well. After that, we are going to take lessons of a regular teacher in sketching from nature. After we are through with Aunt Alice, Mamma reads aloud to us while we rest our eyes. She has just finished the second volume of 'Mr. Rutherford's Children,' and I think it is the nicest book I ever read, except 'Little Women.'

"Last week Mamma took us both to see Mr. Starr exhibit his magic-lantern in the Town Hall. He had a large white screen put up at the back of the stage, and the hall was darkened so that we could see the reflections on the screen. He showed us the sting of a bee and the point of a cambric-needle, very much larger than they really are. The needle looked like a

blunt stick, but the sting was as sharp as ever. He had a little animal which he called a water-tiger. It is really so small that you can hardly see it; but on the screen it looked as large as a kitten, and we could see it eat bits of food which he threw into the water. I cannot remember all the things he showed us; but after that part of the exhibition was over, he pretended to talk to a man in the cellar, and he made his voice sound as if another man was answering him. Then he made believe saw a log of wood and catch a bumble-bee. We never heard a ventriloquist before, and of course enjoyed it very much. You asked me what color would be prettiest for your room-paper. I should think you would like blue best. Next week we are invited to Maggie Alison's party. Every one of the girls must either learn some little piece of poetry or a funny story, to repeat there. After supper, Mrs. Alison is going to show us a set of photographs which have been sent her from Europe. Ellen and I are working a set of bureau-mats to give Maggie.

"I wish you could see our new kittens that are playing on the rug. Mine is gray and Ellen's is buff. You know our kitty ran away, and we both felt so badly that our neighbor, Mrs. Williams, sent us these two last Saturday. I wish you would tell us what to call them. We cannot think of any names pretty enough. Next week the garden will be made, and we are going to try and keep our flower-beds in better order than we did last year.

"I had a letter last week from Cousin John. His letter sounds as if he was as old as Papa. He is going to Phillips's Academy next September. All the family are sitting here, and send their love. Aunt Alice says she shall not make her visit at your house until June. Give my love to aunt and uncle. Thank them for asking me to go and see you this summer.

"Your affectionate cousin,

"FANNIE A. HOLMES."

Ellen's letter :

"INGLESIDE, April.

"DEAR AGNES : We are very busy, so I cannot write much. We take lessons from Aunt Alice. We go to school all day. I study arithmetic, and geography, and other things.

"We went to an exhibition, and had a splendid time. The man sawed, and caught a bee. The weather is quite warm now. Warm weather is better than cold for a great many things. We don't have any vacation until June. Sixteen girls are in our class. The man's name was Starr. He had a water-tiger that he fed. Aunt Alice sends her love. I am working a mat. We are going to have a bed in the garden. Mamma sends love to you all. I do not like to write letters, so you must excuse a short one. We are going to plant a great many seeds. We are invited to a party. Mamma and Papa are very well; so are Fanny and I. We have two kittens. I cannot think of anything more to say. I hope you will write me a long letter very soon. I like to get letters often.

"Your affectionate friend,

ELLEN."



## STATIONERY.

THERE is no more useless thing in the world, considered *per se*, and without regard to its contents, than a note-paper which has been written upon. If it holds a line from the beloved one, a promise to pay, a poem, a recipe, it may secure a brief existence; if not, it is cast aside, a disregarded thing, of no earthly use to anybody.

And yet in the production and purchase of these ephemeral luxuries large sums of money are yearly spent. Every season sees some new device in shape or style. "From grave to gay, from lively to severe," the costly whim ranges. Now a square sheet, now an oblong, rules the day; of satin smoothness one month, rough as shagreen the next; with initials and monograms of every design and shade, and envelopes as multiform as Proteus. A guide is required to comprehend, and a fortune to follow, the exigence of Fashion.

Sometimes the novelty is "tint." The note which, when first glanced at, appears white, on closer examination reveals, so to speak, a faint perfume of color—blushes inaudible pink or most delicate lilac, or shadows forth the faintest green. And the monogram which crowns the sheet is to the monogram of two years before as the full-fledged summer to the pale spring. No longer a mere interlacement of lines—red, blue, or black—it is now a work of art,—as intricate, as rich, and as costly as an initial letter in an illuminated missal. Gold, carmine, ultramarine, umber, royal purple, blend therein in soft unison—the writing-desk, when opened, glows like a bed of jewels or a fairy flower-garden. When opened—Ah!—there's the rub! It is when the test of use is applied to these dainty creations that the question arises, "What has the modern note-writer to say which is worthy of committal to these exquisite pages?"

For paper cannot enhance thought—it is thought which embalms the paper. Shakespeare inscribed his sonnets and Sir Philip Sidney his sad, melodious lays upon sheets so coarse and yellow that our very cooks would scorn them. Yet what fragrance, what priceless value now hangs about those dis-

colored folios. And when upon the luxurious smoothness of the modern page we find only the penury of feeling and the poverty of style, the ill-punctuated, ill-arranged, inelegantly phrased, and meaningless lines which make up the average letter, we are forced to sigh that this inheritance of the centuries should not be in the hands of worthier beings or applied to worthier uses.

A fashionable note, whose irregular scrawl has consumed two of the minikin sheets now in vogue, may be fairly computed to have cost at least three times the value of its postage stamp and ten of its contents. Glancing it over, we are forced to frown as we laugh—and we recall something once said by Cûrtis, to the effect that it is useless to waste time in acquiring mastery over a foreign language, French for example, when the mind affords you nothing worth saying in your own. English answers as well as purest Tuscan if all you desire to express is that the evening is a warm one, or “this is a pleasant party.” And so with paper. Commercial note is good enough, and too good, for the commonplace chit-chat of average correspondence. And though wit still exists in the world, and sense, and poetry, and epigram; though letters are written to-day as bright and forcible as any of Madame de Sévigné’s or Walpole’s, still the art of letter-writing is confessedly in its decadence, and the best examples existing among us are, as a general thing, written on plain paper, and sent forth with no waving of gorgeous flags or blowing of trumpets. “Good wine needs no bush.” Let that content those whom an untoward fate compels to “seal their letters with their thumbs,” and dispense with a monogram.

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*PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.*

CERTAIN amiable cynics are so gracious as to say that most of the trouble in the world comes from women's writing letters. With this kindly remark they dismiss the epistolary subject as one too trivial for their mighty regard. Fortunately, this opinion is seldom expressed, and letter-writing has not therefore fallen into such disrepute as it must have done had this view been widely held. Good correspondence is one of the social graces. To compose a really excellent letter is a most difficult and delicate task, calling into play all the intellectual faculties, and exercising them each in turn. Thousands of persons of good position and average culture go to their graves without ever having written a creditable epistle during their whole lives. Most people do not correspond with persons with whom they are on formal terms; and when they write to relatives and intimates, they scratch off something about Jane's engagement, Harry's sprained ankle, or Mr. Jones's change of business, and call it a letter. These family matters are undoubtedly interesting to the recipients; but it would also be pleasant to know the writer's opinion of a new book, the last picture from some celebrated easel, or the cause of some great national agitation. It is only through letters that widely separated friends can keep pace with each other's mental and spiritual growth; and if these subjects are never touched upon, how can either tell whether the other has become an intellectual dwarf or giant since they met?

The gift of language, of correct word-using, is bestowed on few by Mother Nature; but it is susceptible of great cultivation, and no method so easily and naturally cultivates facility of expression as the habit of writing thoughtful letters. Instead of fewer letters, more and better ones ought to be written. Children should be encouraged and aided in their feeble attempts at correspondence, for they are laying the foundation of future intellectual delight, if they but carefully try each time to do their best. Felicities of phrase, the power of expressing delicate shades of meaning, will come with practice.

The habit of writing induces verbal exactness, which conversation rarely or never does, and is advantageous in many ways. The interchange of ideas and sentiments in private correspondence is a mental stimulus too little appreciated and heeded, and, where time and circumstances favor, cannot be too sedulously improved.

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### *ANSWERING LETTERS.*

THE most satisfactory correspondence between friends is that which is prompted and carried on by inclination, and not from any sense of duty. When we receive a private letter from one whom we esteem and cherish, what emotions, sympathies, and affections it excites! Our heart and our mind respond as we run over the welcome lines. Every question suggests an answer, every sentence evokes a spontaneous reply. Our actively enlisted brain has prepared, without effort, whatever we wish to say. It is ready and anxious to dictate to the hand, and if its dictation be not followed at or about that time, the force of the inspiration will be dulled, if, indeed, we are not bereft of it entirely. The longer the answer is delayed, the more difficult and unsatisfactory it becomes. All the fresh, fine things we were ready to say evaporate; what would have been a warm delight becomes a frigid duty. The letter reflects our mood; is stiff, awkward, forced—not at all what we had hoped and wanted to put on paper.

Private correspondence of the right kind is little more than recorded conversation. To place great gaps between letters and their answers is like putting questions to a friend one day, and waiting until the next day, or the next week, for his replies. A hundred things are likely to interfere with answering letters; but the thing that interferes most is our own procrastination. If we make it a rule to attend to them at the



earliest leisure moment, we shall soon find few missives rebuking us for silence, and we shall feel that our correspondence has grown to be what it always should be—a spontaneous, pleasant, entirely cordial interchange of friendship.

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### *SOME WESTERN SCHOOL-MASTERS.*

IN a ragged little frontier village, where the smoky wigwams of the savage and thriftless Sioux still lingered among the unpainted board cottages of the settlers, there was a school-master who published a little sheet, at the close of his school term, filled with the essays of his pupils. For a motto over this weakly paper he told the printer to set:

“No pent-up continent contracts our powers,  
But the whole boundless universe is ours.”

The printer thought that the little school was staking out rather too large a preëmption claim: he suggested to the teacher that

“No pent-up Utica contracts our powers,  
But the whole boundless continent is ours,”

was the correct version, and was sufficiently broad for the size of the sheet.

“Oh, that is n’t right,” said the master, contemptuously. “I suppose some of them Utica papers had it that way.”

It seems just possible that this teacher, on the edge of civilization, was a sort of embodiment of our modern spirit. Is the present system of cramming a great advance on older and simpler methods of teaching? In the curriculum of our time, neither Utica nor the continent will serve our turn. We attempt the whole boundless universe, forgetful of Hosea Biglow’s wise couplet:

“For it strikes me ther’s sech a thing ez sinnin’  
By overloadin’ children’s underpinnin’.”

As I recall the old-time school, I cannot but think that, if its discipline was somewhat more brutal than the school discipline of to-day, its course of study was far less so. Children did not often die of the severity of the old masters, though many perish from the hard requirements of the modern system.

To a nervous child, the old discipline was, indeed, very terrible. The long beech switches hanging on hooks against the wall haunted me night and day, from the time I entered one of the old schools. And whenever there came an outburst between master and pupils, the thoughtless child often got the beating that should have fallen upon the malicious mischief-maker. As the master was always quick to fly into a passion, the fun-loving boys were always happy to stir him up. It was an exciting sport, like bull-baiting, or like poking sticks through a fence at a cross dog. Sometimes the ferocious master showed an ability on his own part to get some fun out of the conflict, as when, on one occasion in a school in Ohio, the boys were forbidden to attend a circus. Five or six of them went, in spite of the prohibition. The next morning, the school-master called them out in the floor and addressed them:

"So you went to the circus, did you?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, the others did not get a chance to see the circus. I want you boys to show them what it looked like, and how the horses galloped around the ring. You will join your hands in a circle about the stove. Now start!"

With that he began whipping them, as they trotted around and around the stove. This story is told, I believe, in a little volume of "Sketches," by Erwin House, now long forgotten, like many other good books of the Western literature of a generation ago. I think the author was one of the boys who "played horse" in the master's circus.

It was fine sport for the more daring boys to plant a handful of coffee-nuts in the ashes just before the master's entrance. It is the nature of these coffee-nuts to lie quietly in the hot ashes for about half an hour, and then to explode with a sharp report, scattering the live coals in an inspiring way. Nothing

could be funnier than the impotent wrath of the school-master, as he went poking in the embers to find the remaining nuts, which generally eluded his search and popped away like torpedoes under his very nose.

The teaching in these schools was often quite absurd. I was made to go through Webster's spelling-book five times before I was thought fit to begin to read, and my mother, twenty years earlier, spelled it through nine times before she was allowed to begin Lindley Murray's "English Reader." It was by mere chance of the survival of some of the tougher old masters that I knew the old school in its glory. The change for the better was already beginning thirty or forty years ago. The old masters taught their pupils to "do sums"; the new ones had already begun to teach arithmetic. In one of the schools in the generation before me was one Jim Garner; he must be an old man now, if he is yet living, and he will pardon my laughing at the boy of fifty years ago. One day he sat for a long time tapping his slate with his pencil.

"Jeems," cried the master, "what are you doing?"

"I'm a-tryin' to think, and I can't," said Jim, "if you take three from one how many there is left."

It was in the same old Bethel school-house, about the same time, that the master, one Benefiel, called out the spelling-class of which my mother, then a little girl, was usually at the head. The word given out was "onion." I suppose the scholars at the head of the class had not recognized the word by its spelling, in studying their lessons. They all missed it widely, spelling it in the most ingeniously incorrect fashions. Near the foot of the class stood a boy who had never been able to climb up toward the head. But of the few words he did know how to spell, one was "onion." When the word was missed at the head he became greatly excited, twisting himself into the most ludicrous contortions as it came nearer and nearer to him. At length the one just above the eager boy missed, the master said "Next," whereupon he exultingly swung his hand above his head and came out with: "O-n, un, i-o-n, yun, *ing-un*—I'm head, by gosh!" and he marched

to the head, while the master hit him a blow across the shoulders for swearing.

The beginning of "educational reform" in my childhood took on curious forms. We had one grown man in Benefiel's school who got his tuition free of charge in consideration of his teaching the master and some of the other pupils geography by the new method of singing it, which he had learned somewhere. At the noon recess he and the master, with others, would sit with Smith's Atlas open before them, singing away in the most earnest and sentimental sing-song such refrains as this, pointing to the State capitals while they sang:

"Maine, Au — gusta! Maine, Au — gusta!

*New Hampshire, Concord, New Hampshire, Concord,"*

and so on down to the newly annexed State of Texas.

The "Rule of Three" was the objective point of all study, and he who ciphered through that had well-nigh exhausted human knowledge. The illiteracy of the up-country regions was very great, and during the six years which my father, on account of declining health, passed in a country place, our experience with schools was not a happy one. There came at one time to our district an old Irish master, who also claimed to be a doctor. Some years before, in a lawsuit in which my father was retained, the old man persisted in writing his own deposition, wherein he related that he had studied "medesin" in Ireland. The old man was very much enraged when my father declined to send us to his school. He had been known to spend a solid hour in family devotions, and then, rising from his knees, to walk across the floor and kick his son for going to sleep during prayers. He was afterward tried for poisoning his wife, but acquitted through the eloquence of that unsurpassed orator, Joseph G. Marshall.

Of course, it often came to pass in such a state of things that men rose to prominence who had little education. A rich distiller, who represented us in Congress some years later, wrote a letter, full of blunders, that fell into the hands of his opponents. They published it, and he suffered much ridicule.



"F——," said one of his friends, "*did* you write that letter?" "Yes," said he, "but it was n't so bad as that—they mutilated it."

In all the period of darkness and insufficient schools that preceded my childhood, there were here and there good teachers in some of the villages, and to the lucky village that had a good master came boys and girls from near and far,—sometimes from fifty miles away. There was never a period of indifference to education in the Ohio River region—never a time when a good school was not accounted a thing of the greatest value; but the sparse settlement made schools scarce,—the great demand for men of education in other walks of life always makes good teachers scarce in a new country,—and the excess of demand over supply in the matter of women left no unmarried young women of education to serve as school-mistresses. The earliest female teachers that I remember, with one exception, were the thrifty wives of New England settlers, who knew how to mind their children and turn an honest dollar by teaching the children of their neighbors. But we were particularly warned against New England provincialisms; my father, who was a graduate of William and Mary, in Virginia, even threatened us with corporal punishment if we should ever give the peculiar vowel sound heard in some parts of New England in such words as "roof" and "root." After our return to the village, I had the good fortune to have some teachers whom I remember with gratitude. One was a Presbyterian minister from New England, who, with his wife,—a woman of fine ability,—taught an excellent school. In this school we first saw blackboards and similar devices for teaching in an intelligent way. The minister's wife kept good books to lend to thoughtful pupils, and her influence on the village was a very beneficent one. Another was Jesse Williams, also a New-Englander, who became afterward a Methodist minister. These two were the only men that I knew in my boyhood who could teach school without beating their pupils like oxen. There was another New England minister, whose pupil I was in one of the Indiana cities, who kept

his school in a state of continual terror. This is a cheap sort of discipline, quite possible to men who have not tact enough to govern otherwise than brutally.

So great was the desire for education in Indiana, even at this early date, that before my memory of the place our old town of Vevay was adorned by a "county seminary." It was proposed to educate by counties, and a seminary was to be built at the county's expense; but the old jealousy between town and country flamed up. The people of the country were not going to pay taxes to build a seminary in town, so the seminary was built outside the corporation line, in a commanding position on the top of a steep hill at least three hundred feet high. This high school always reminded me of the temple of fame which did duty as frontispiece to Webster's spelling-book in that day; the temple being situated on an inaccessible mountain, at the foot of which an ambitious school-boy stood looking wistfully up. For one or two winters, the village youth and the country children boarding in town walked a mile, and then scrambled up this hard hill; but the school was soon abandoned for better schools in the town, and the old brick "seminary" stands there yet, I believe, a monument of educational folly. Many an ambitious modern device is like our seminary—useless from inaccessibility.

While the good Presbyterian minister was teaching in our village, he was waked up one winter morning by a poor bound boy, who had ridden a farm horse many miles to get the "master" to show him how to "do a sum" that had puzzled him. The fellow was trying to educate himself, but was required to be back at home in time to begin his day's work as usual. The good master, chafing his hands to keep them warm, sat down by the boy and expounded the "sum" to him so that he understood it. Then the poor boy straightened himself up and, thrusting his hard hand into the pocket of his blue jeans trowsers, pulled out a quarter of a dollar, explaining, with a blush, that it was all he could pay, for it was all he had. Of course the master made him put it back, and told him to come whenever he wanted any help. I remember the huski-





THE OLD SCHOOL-HOUSE.



ness of the minister's voice when he told us about it in school that morning. When I recall how eagerly the people sought for opportunities of education, I am not surprised to hear that Indiana, of all the States, has to-day one of the largest, if not the largest, school-fund.

We had one teacher who was, so far as natural genius for teaching goes, the best of all I have ever known. Mrs. Julia L. Dumont is, like all our Western writers of that day, except Prentice, almost entirely forgotten. But in the time, before railways, when the West, shut in by the Alleghanies, had an incipient literature, Mrs. Dumont occupied no mean place as a writer of poetry and prose tales. Eminent *littérateurs* of the time, from Philadelphia and Cincinnati, used to come to Vevay to see her; but they themselves—these great lights of ancient American literature away back in the forties—are also forgotten. Who remembers Gallagher and the rest to-day? Dear brethren, who like myself scratch away to fill up magazine pages, and who, no doubt, like myself are famous enough to be asked for an autograph, or a "sentiment" in an album sometimes, let us not boast ourselves. Why, indeed, should the spirit of mortal be proud? We also shall be forgotten,—the next generation of school-girls will get their autographs from a set of upstarts who will smile at our stories and poems as out-of-date puerilities. Some industrious Allibone, making a cemetery of dead authors, may give us, in his dictionary, three lines apiece as a sort of head-stone. Oh, let us be humble and pray that even the Allibone that is to come do not forget us. For I look in vain in Allibone for some of the favorite names in our Western Parnassus. It was not enough that the East swallowed that incipient literature—it even obliterated the memory of it. Let us hope that the admirable Mr. Tyler, who has made to live again the memories of so many colonial writers, will revive also the memory of some of the forgotten authors of the Mississippi Valley.

Among those who have been so swiftly forgotten as not even to have a place in Allibone, is my old and once locally famous teacher, Mrs. Dumont. We thought her poem on

"The Retreat of the Ten Thousand" admirable, but we were partial judges. Her story of "Boonesborough" was highly praised by the great lights of the time. But her book of stories is out of print, and her poems are forgotten, and so also are the great lights who admired them. I do not pretend that there was enough in these writings to have made them deserve a different fate. Ninety-nine hundredths of all good literary production must of necessity be forgotten; if the old trees endured forever, there would be no room for the new shoots.

But as a school-mistress Mrs. Dumont deserves immortality. She knew nothing of systems, but she went unerringly to the goal by pure force of native genius. In all her early life she taught because she was poor, but after her husband's increasing property relieved her from necessity, she still taught school from love of it. When she was past sixty years old, a school-room was built for her alongside her residence, which was one of the best in the town. It was here that I first knew her, after she had already taught two generations in the place. The "graded" schools had been newly introduced, and no man was found who could, either in acquirements or ability, take precedence of the venerable school-mistress; so the high school was given to her.

I can see the wonderful old lady now, as she was then, with her cape pinned awry, rocking her splint-bottom chair nervously while she talked. Full of all manner of knowledge, gifted with something very like eloquence in speech, abounding in affection for her pupils and enthusiasm in teaching, she moved us strangely. Being infatuated with her, we became fanatic in our pursuit of knowledge, so that the school hours were not enough, and we had a "lyceum" in the evening for reading "compositions," and a club for the study of history. If a recitation became very interesting, the entire school would sometimes be drawn into the discussion of the subject; all other lessons went to the wall, books of reference were brought out of her library, hours were consumed, and many a time the school session was prolonged until darkness forced us reluctantly to adjourn.

Mrs. Dumont was the ideal of a teacher because she succeeded in forming character. She gave her pupils unstinted praise, not hypocritically, but because she lovingly saw the best in every one. We worked in the sunshine. A dull but industrious pupil was praised for diligence, a bright pupil for ability, a good one for general excellence. The dullards got more than their share, for, knowing how easily such an one is disheartened, Mrs. Dumont went out of her way to praise the first show of success in a slow scholar. She treated no two alike. She was full of all sorts of knack and tact, a person of infinite resource for calling out the human spirit. She could be incredibly severe when it was needful, and no overgrown boy whose meanness had once been analyzed by Mrs. Dumont ever forgot it.

I remember one boy with whom she had taken some pains. One day he wrote an insulting word about one of the girls of the school on the door of a deserted house. Two of us were deputized by the other boys to defend the girl by complaining of him. Mrs. Dumont took her seat, and began to talk to him before the school. The talking was all there was of it; but I think I never pitied any human being more than I did that boy, as she showed him his vulgarity and his meanness, and as at last, in the climax of her indignation, she called him "a miserable hawbuck." At another time, when she had picked a piece of paper from the floor with a bit of profanity written on it, she talked about it until the whole school detected the author by the beads of perspiration on his forehead.

When I had written a composition on "The Human Mind," based on Combe's Phrenology, and adorned with quotations from Pope's "Essay on Man," she gave me to read the old Encyclopedia Britannica containing an article expounding the Hartleian system of mental philosophy, and followed this with Locke on the "Conduct of the Understanding." She was the only teacher I have known who understood that school studies were entirely secondary to general reading as a source of culture, and who put the habit of good reading first in the list of acquirements.

There was a rack for hats and cloaks so arranged as to cut off a portion of the school from the teacher's sight. Some of the larger girls, who occupied this space, took advantage of their concealed position to do a great deal of talking and tittering, which did not escape Mrs. Dumont's watchfulness. But in the extreme corner of the room was the seat of the excellent Drusilla H——, who had never violated a rule of the school. To reprimand the others, while excepting her, would have excited jealousy and complaints. The girls who sat in that part of the room were detained after school, and treated to one of Mrs. Dumont's tender but caustic lectures on the dishonorableness of secret ill-doing. Drusilla bore silently her share of the reproof. But at the last the school-mistress said :

"Now, my dears, it may be that there is some one among you not guilty of misconduct. If there is, I know I can trust you to tell me who is not to blame."

"Drusilla never talks," they all said at once, while Drusilla, girl-like, fell to crying.

But the most remarkable illustration of Mrs. Dumont's skill in matters of discipline was shown in a case in which all the boys of the school were involved, and were for a short time thrown into antagonism to a teacher whose ascendancy over them had been complete.

We were playing "town-ball" on the common, at a long distance from the school-room. Town-ball is one of the old games from which the more scientific but not half so amusing "national game" of base-ball has since been evolved. In that day the national game was not thought of. Eastern youth played field-base and Western boys town-ball in a free and happy way, with soft balls, primitive bats, and no nonsense. There were no scores, but a catch or a cross-out in town-ball put the whole side out, leaving the others to take the bat, or "paddle," as it was appropriately called. The very looseness of the game gave opportunity for many ludicrous mischances and surprising turns which made it a most joyous play.

Either because the wind was blowing adversely, or because the play was more than commonly interesting, we failed to



hear the ringing of Mrs. Dumont's hand-bell at one o'clock. The afternoon wore on until more than an hour of school-time had passed, when some one suddenly bethought himself. We dropped the game and started, pell-mell, full of consternation, for the school-room. We would at that moment have preferred to face an angry school-master with his beechen rod than to have offended one whom we revered so much. The girls all sat in their places; the teacher was sitting silent and awful in her rocking-chair; in the hour and a half no lessons had been recited. We shuffled into our seats and awaited the storm. It was the high school, and the boys were mostly fifteen or sixteen years of age, but the school-mistress had never a rod in the room. Such weapons are for people of fewer resources than she. Very quietly she talked to us, but with great emphasis. She gave no chance for explanation or apology. She was hopelessly hurt and affronted. We had humiliated her before the whole town, she said. She should take away from us the morning and afternoon recess for a week. She would demand an explanation from us to-morrow.

It was not possible that a company of boys could be kept for half an hour in such a moral sweat-box as that to which she treated us without growing angry. When school was dismissed, we held a running indignation meeting as we walked toward home. Of course we all spoke at once. But after a while the more moderate saw that the teacher had some reason. Nevertheless, one boy was appointed to draft a written reply that should set forth our injured feelings. I remember in what perplexity that committee found himself. With every hour he felt more and more that the teacher was right and the boys wrong, and that by the next morning the reviving affection of the scholars for the beloved and venerated school-mistress would cause them to appreciate this. So that the address which was presented for their signatures did not breathe much indignation. I can almost recall every word of that somewhat pompous but very sincere petition. It was about as I give it here:

"HONORED MADAM: In regard to our offense of yesterday, we beg that you will do us the justice to believe that it was not intentional. We do not ask you to remit the punishment you have inflicted in taking away our recess, but we do ask you to remit the heavier penalty we have incurred — your own displeasure."

The boys all willingly signed this except one who was, perhaps, the only conscious offender of the party. He confessed that he had observed that the sun was "getting a little slanting" while we were at play, but as his side "had the paddles" he did not say anything until they were put out. The unwilling boy wanted more indignation in the address, and he wanted the recess back. But when all the others had signed he did not dare leave his name off, but put it at the bottom of the list.

With trembling hands we gave the paper to the school-mistress. How some teachers would have used such a paper as a means of further humiliation to the offenders! How few could have used it as she did! The morning wore on without recess. The lessons were heard as usual. As the noon hour drew near, Mrs. Dumont rose from her chair and went into the library. We all felt that something was going to happen. She came out with a copy of Shakespeare, which she opened at the fourth scene of the fourth act of the second part of King Henry IV. Giving the book to my next neighbor and myself, she bade us read the scene, alternating with the change of speaker. You remember the famous dialogue in that scene between the dying king and the prince who has prematurely taken the crown from the bedside of the sleeping king. It was all wonderfully fresh to us and to our school-mates, whose interest was divided between the scene and a curiosity as to the use the teacher meant to make of it. At length the reader who took the king's part read:

"O my son!

Heaven put it in thy mind to take it hence,  
That thou mightst win the more thy father's love,  
Pleading so wisely in excuse of it."

Then she took the book and closed it. The application was evident to all, but she made us a touching little speech full of affection, and afterward restored the recess. She detained the girls when we had gone to read to them the address, that she might "show them what noble brothers they had." Without doubt she made overmuch of our nobleness. But no one knew better than Mrs. Dumont that the surest way of evoking the best, in man or boy, is to make the most of the earliest symptoms of it. From that hour our school-mistress had our whole hearts; we loved her and revered her; we were thoughtless enough, but for the most of us her half-suspected wish was a supreme law.

So, after all, it does not matter that the world no longer reads her stories or remembers her poems. Her life always seemed to me a poem, or something better than a poem. It does not matter, fellow-scribblers, that the generation to come shall forget us and go to upstart fellows of another generation for autograph verses for church fairs and charity bazars. It does not matter greatly, dear, aspiring young reader, whether you ever succeed in getting your poetry embalmed in "Scribner" or not. I cannot read an old magazine of forty years ago without a laugh—and almost a tear—over the airs those notabilities of a day gave themselves. How sure they were of immortality, and how utterly forgotten are the most of them, like last year's burdock, that boasted itself so proudly in the fence-row! But whether you print your story or poem or not, blessed are you if you put heroism into your life, so that the memory of it shall refresh some weary wayfarer long after the fickle public has forgotten your work.

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### PART III. THE VACATIONS.

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#### *HOW TO TRAVEL.*

THIS article does not refer to the journey to Europe, toward which almost all young people are looking. When the opportunity for foreign travel comes, there are plenty of guide-books and letters from abroad which will tell you just what to take with you, and what you ought to do in every situation. This is for short, every-day trips, which people take without much thought; but as there is a right and a wrong way of doing even little things, young folks may as well take care that they receive and give the most pleasure possible in a short journey, and then, when the trip across the ocean comes, they will not be annoying themselves and others by continual mistakes.

As packing a trunk is usually the first preparation for a trip, we will begin with that.

It is a very good way to collect what is most important before you begin, so that you may not leave out any necessary article. Think over what you will be likely to need; for a little care before you start may save you a great deal of inconvenience in the end. Be sure, before you begin, that your



trunk is in good order, and that you have the key. And when you shut it for the last time, do not leave the straps sticking out upon the outside. Put your heavy things at the bottom, packing them tightly, so that they will not rattle about when the trunk is reversed. Put the small articles in the tray. Anything which will be likely to be scratched or defaced by rubbing, should be wrapped in a handkerchief and laid among soft things. If you must carry anything breakable, do it up carefully and put it in the center of the trunk, packing clothing closely about it. Bottles should have the corks tied in with strong twine. Put them near articles which cannot be injured by the contents, if a breakage occurs. Tack on your trunk a card with your permanent address. As this card is to be consulted only if the trunk is lost, it is not necessary to be constantly changing it. Take, in the traveling-bag, pins and a needle and thread, so that, in case of any accident to your clothes, they can be repaired without troubling any one else. A postal-card and a pencil and paper take up but little room, and may be very convenient. The best way to carry your lunch is in a pasteboard box, which can be thrown away after you have disposed of the contents.

Put your money in an inner pocket, reserving in your purse only what you will be likely to need on the way, so that you may be able to press your way through a crowd without fear of pickpockets. Your purse should also contain your name and address.

Try to be ready, so that you will not be hurried at the last moment; and this does not mean that it is necessary to be at the station a long time before the train leaves. To be punctual does not mean to be *too early*, but to be just early enough.

Try to find out, before you start, what train and car you ought to take, and have your trunk properly checked. Put the check in some safe place, but first look at the number, so that you may identify the check if lost by you and found by others. Have your ticket where you can easily get it, and need not be obliged to appear, when the conductor comes, as if it was a perfect surprise to you that he should ask for it.

Of course, you have a right to the best seat which is vacant, and, if there is plenty of room, you can put your bundles beside or opposite you; but remember that you have only paid for one seat, and be ready at once to make room for another passenger, if necessary, without acting as though you were conferring a favor.

If you have several packages, and wish to put any of them in the rack over your head, you will be less likely to forget them if you put all together, than you will if you keep a part in your hand.

If you *must* read in the cars, never in any circumstances take a book that has not fair, clear type; and stop reading at the earliest approach of twilight. If, as you read, you hold your ticket, or some other plain piece of paper, under the line you are reading, sliding it down as you proceed, you will find that you can read almost as rapidly, and with much less injury to your eyes. A newspaper is the worst reading you can have, as the print is usually indistinct, and it is impossible to hold it still.

You may not care to read in the cars when in motion, but it is convenient to have a book with you, in case the train should be delayed.

If your friends accompany you to the station, be careful that your last words are not too personal or too loud. Young people are apt to overlook this, and thus sometimes make themselves ridiculous before the other passengers by joking and laughing in a way which might be perfectly proper at home, but which before a company of strangers is not in good taste.

If you meet acquaintances, do not call out their names so distinctly as to introduce them to the other passengers, as it is never pleasant for people to have the attention of strangers called to them in that way. If you are alone, do not be too ready to make acquaintances. Reply politely to any civil remark or offer of assistance; but do not allow yourself to be drawn into conversation, unless it is with some one of whose trustworthiness you are reasonably sure, and even then do not forget that you are talking to a perfect stranger.

If you cannot have everything just as you prefer, remember that you are in a public conveyance, and that the other passengers have as much right to their way as you have to yours. If you find that your open window annoys your neighbor, do not refuse to shut it; and if the case is reversed, do not complain, unless you are really afraid of taking cold, and cannot conveniently change your seat. Above all things, do not get into a dispute about it, like the two women, one of whom declared that she should die if the window was open, and the other responded that she should stifle if it was shut, until one of the passengers requested the conductor to open it awhile and kill one, and then shut it and kill the other, that the rest might have peace.

There are few situations where the disposition is more thoroughly shown than it is in traveling. A long journey is considered by some people to be a perfect test of the temper. There are many ways in which an unselfish person will find an opportunity to be obliging. It is surprising to see how people who consider themselves kind and polite members of society can sometimes forget all their good manners in the cars, showing a perfect disregard of the comfort—and even the rights—of others, which would banish them from decent society if shown elsewhere.

To return to particular directions: do not entertain those who are traveling with you by constant complaints of the dust, or the heat, or the cold. The others are probably as much annoyed by these things as you are, and fault-finding will only make them the more unpleasant to all. Be careful what you say about those near you, as a thoughtless remark to a friend in too loud a tone may cause a real heart-ache. Many a weary mother has been pained by hearing complaints of a fretful child, whose crying most probably distresses her more than any one else. Instead of saying, "Why will people travel with babies?" remember that it is sometimes unavoidable, and do not disfigure your face by a frown at the disturbance, but try to do what you can to make the journey pleasant for those around you, at least by a serene and cheerful face. A person

who really wishes to be helpful to others, will find plenty of opportunities to "lend a hand" without becoming conspicuous in any way.

Do not ask too many questions of other passengers. Keep your eyes and ears open, and you will know as much as the rest do. If you wish to inquire about anything, let it be of the conductor, whose business it is to answer you, and do not detain him unnecessarily. Remember what he tells you, that you may not be like the woman Gail Hamilton describes, who asked the conductor the same question every time he came around, as if she thought he had undergone a moral change during his absence, and might answer her more truthfully.

If you get out of the car at any station on your way, be sure to observe which car it was, and which train, so that you need not go about inquiring where you belong when you wish to return to your seat.

A large proportion of the accidents which happen every year are caused by carelessness. Young people are afraid of seeming timid and anxious, and will sometimes, in avoiding this, risk their lives very foolishly. They step from the train before it has fairly stopped, or put their heads out of the window when the car is in motion, or rest the elbow on the sill of an open window in such a way that a passing train may cause serious, if not fatal, injury. Sometimes they pass carelessly from one car to another when the train is still, forgetting that it may start at any moment and throw them off their balance. Many similar exposures can be avoided by a little care and thought.

These are very plain, simple rules, which it may be supposed are already known to every one; but a little observation will show that they are not always put in practice.

A great deal has been left unsaid here on the advantages and pleasures of travel; but without a knowledge of the simple details we have given, one will be sure to miss much of the culture and enjoyment which might otherwise be gained by it.



*HINTS FOR THE SUMMER VACATION.*

**F**IRST. If there be any weakly children in the family, make an effort to find a boarding-place near a river or lake, and give them a boat and oars (with due regard for their safety, of course). There can be no healthier pastime for boys or girls of dyspeptic or consumptive tendencies than paddling the summer away in a light skiff. We know of more than one child—a few years ago narrow-chested, pale, stooped-shouldered, subject to incessant headaches in school, who is now broad-breasted and ruddy, simply from the exercise of rowing during the summer months.

*Secondly.* Pack up all the finery of both girls and boys and—leave it at home. Have stout, well-fitting shoes made for them to order, without heels. Clothe the whole of them in flannel. Navy blue at forty-five or fifty cents per yard is the best. Pretty and cheap loose-fitting suits of this are the most artistic dress for child or adult on the sea-side, hills, or wherever tramping, and sudden showers, and downright fun are the rule. Flannel is, by all odds, the coolest dress to wear in the hot season, and an almost certain preventive of colds, neuralgia, etc.

*Thirdly.* If there are boys, you will find it a wise investment to spend six or eight dollars for a shelter tent. They could sleep in it, if necessary, with benefit to health; but, in any case, they can carry it to lonely solitudes back of the barn, or up on the mountain, and camp out all day and night, cooking their own meals and keeping up a watch-fire.

*Fourthly.* Provide, for rainy days, a checker-board, decalcomanie pictures, story-books, and especially good-humor. A family stranded upon the barren shore of a farm-house with nothing but their trunks is a spectacle not edifying to gods or men.

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*CAMPING OUT.*

IN the first warm days of summer every one who lives in town turns with longing eyes, and lungs that prophetically breathe the miasma and heat and dust of August, to mountain or sea beach. The girls bring in to dinner accounts of the Browns' intended campaign to Saratoga, of the Whites' tour to the Lakes. Mamma looks at Jane's thin cheeks, or the baby's pale lips; the father of the family goes down street hopelessly counting the cost of hotel bills at the Branch, or groans at the remembrance of last summer's broiling in a road-side farm-house, with the fare of everlasting bacon and cabbage, and the all-pervading odor of piggery and soap-suds. Now let us suggest again, to bring rest to these troubled souls, a plan which is rapidly growing in favor with many cultured people who really wish rest in summer, and go out of town to find health and nature, and not fashion and more anxious swarming crowds than those left behind. We mean camping out. A tent, or two if necessary, can be either bought or hired for the summer, and transported with small cost. Excellent portable beds are packed in traveling bags, and sold for five dollars, which will last a life-time. The tents can be pitched on the beach, in the Virginia or White Mountains, on a Minnesota prairie, within sight of a dozen lakes set like pearls; in the Unaka range, where the bears will sociably visit the camp-fire; or on Hudson's Bay, where there will be the zest of a nip of Arctic cold—and all for the cost of transportation. A bag or two of flour, coffee, and sugar are all the provisions needed. The men of the party can furnish trout, sea-fish, venison, etc., etc., and the women can cook them. We would advise, for a stay of a month or two, that servants be left behind, and the whole family go back as far as possible to natural conditions of life. In cases where easy access to the city is desired, the better plan is to camp on the Jersey beach, near enough the sea to escape mosquitoes, and within a half-hour's walk of a railroad station. An almost absolute solitude is attainable in many portions of the coast, and every-

where fish, snipe, and crabs, for the taking. People who are above conventionality, and who have a lucky drop of vagabond blood in their veins, will, of course, find the keenest enjoyment in this mode of passing the summer, but everybody will find it healthful and cheap.

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*ONE WAY TO SPEND THE SUMMER  
IN THE COUNTRY.*

WITH the warm days of spring comes the question, "What shall we do with the children this summer?" A celebrated physician has told me that children in the city very often get through the summer as well as those who have been in the country, but that in the fall they do not show the same power in resisting disease. But what are we to do with them—where take them? The whole country is full of resorts—from great watering-places to private boarding-houses. Who, after trying them all, has not had a longing for a country home of one's own? And who has not given up the thought as entirely out of the question, except for very rich people? But it is not for the rich that I am induced to relate my unique experience of keeping house for the summer in the country.

Two years ago I had tried every experiment, except a country home of our own. We had been in Europe for two summers, but had come home that the children might be put to school; I had taken them to Bedford and Berkeley, and the White Sulphur Springs, and had tried the sea-shore, boarding-houses, and private country farms (the last by far the most desirable), but to all these I had found serious objections. For years I had longed for a country home of my own, but every one opposed me. I have been told that generally the prominent men in our cities have been born

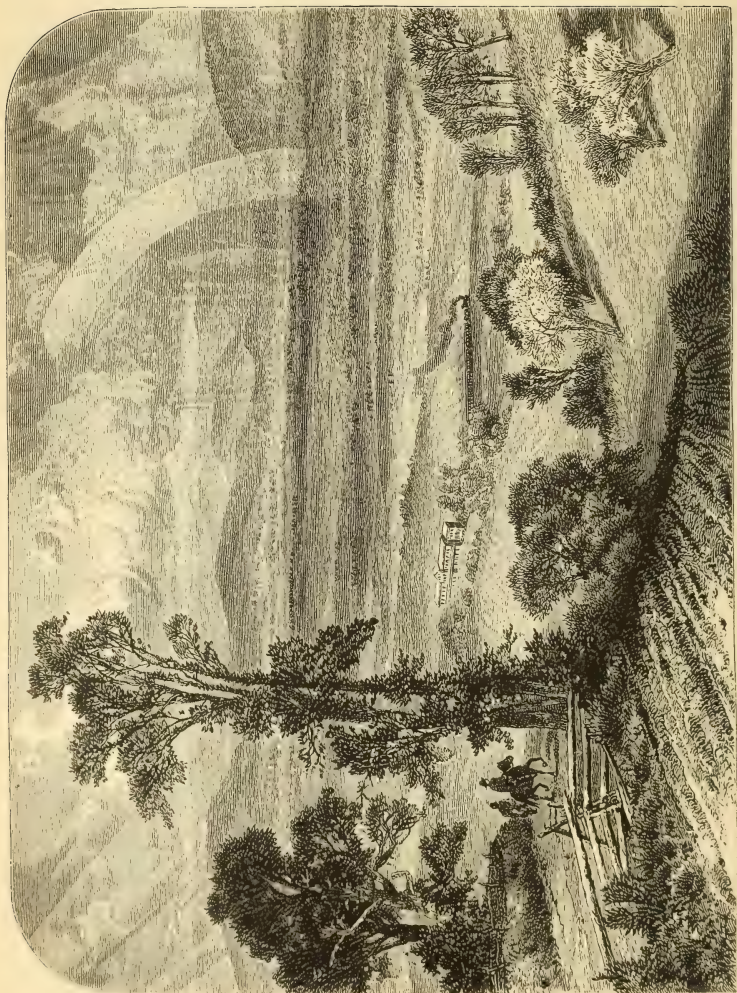
in the country, but that the next generation is almost sure to deteriorate. The conditions of city life are such that there seems no escape from this, and this was my principal reason for desiring a country home. I thought nothing else would give my boys a chance in life. I wanted them to rough it, and learn bravely to meet and overcome difficulties. I dreaded to find them deteriorating. My older boy was thirteen—delicate, pale, and overgrown. When out of school he lived in his workshop with his tools. The younger one read continually. They had the city boys' meager range of play, with no hardy exercise, and but little fun.

In June of 1875 I heard that a cousin had bought a farm of about one hundred acres adjoining his own property, and as I knew he was not going to use the house himself, I wrote and offered to buy it, with some ten or twenty acres. He refused to sell, but was willing to rent if I could live in the house. Being desperate, I was willing to go into any kind of a house that kept out rain and snakes.

We went together to examine the house, and found it in almost a ruinous condition. The out-buildings were equally bad, and an old corn-house was at the foot of the lawn, directly before the door. The distance from the city was twenty-five miles by rail, and from the station to the house was but half a mile. The healthfulness of the place was undoubted. The house was on a high hill, with a lovely view of a well-cultivated country. There was a spring of delicious cold water three hundred feet off, but it was eighty-three feet below the level of the house. A stone dairy was next to the spring, and up above, near the kitchen, was an ice-house full of ice. The house consisted of five rooms in a row, with a porch running its entire length—I may say porches, for the floors were on different levels, and of plank, brick, and stone. The roofs were not of the same height nor pitch. Above, for the length of two of the second-story rooms, was a very comfortable and roomy porch, with a roof that overhung so low as to keep off much of the glare of the sky. Only three bedrooms on the second floor could be made habitable. Lead-







A VIEW WHICH CITY CHILDREN WOULD REMEMBER.

ing to the house was an avenue of locust-trees. One side of this avenue swept around the foot of the yard, and the other immediately before the house. These trees, with a magnificent willow, made considerable shade.

My cousin, Judge Snowden, thought it would be impossible for me to live in such a house, but I very well knew it would be this or none. I was not equal to going among strangers searching for another, so I told him I would try it.

He agreed to paint the inside, paper two rooms, whitewash everywhere, put down a new floor to the main porch, and clean up generally. The rent was to be \$150 for fifteen months, which included two summers. I was to use the pasture-field, have all the fruit I could find, and do as I chose so I did not interfere with the farming operations. This was July 1st, and we were to move up on the 10th. Knowing it was only an experiment, I was careful to furnish in the simplest manner. It is really astonishing how little is needed to make one comfortable in summer. Two furniture wagons well packed carried nearly all that we needed. On the cars I sent up the kitchen stove, refrigerator, barrel of flour, and boxes of china, groceries, and hams. Except the first two, a kitchen safe, a few bedsteads, and the heavy kitchen utensils, I bought everything new (of course pillows, feather-beds to make the mattresses more comfortable, tubs, etc., were carried up and down spring and fall). The entire cost of the new articles, including chairs, benches, tins, china, bedsteads, mattresses, and a very excellent walnut dining-table with ten leaves that I found at a second-hand store, was \$92.37. The freight on everything by wagon and by rail was \$24.75, making in all \$117.12. The floor of the large parlor, which we used as a dining-room, was covered with a Brussels carpet that I had used in the city and put aside; in the country it looked almost new. At each window was hung a paper blind that cost but eight cents. I pasted over a hem on each side, a strip of muslin across the top, and a stick in the bottom, and the curtains have lasted well. New Swiss muslin curtains hung

over these gave the dining-room a look of refinement, and a bright red cover over the table, with a student's lamp at night, gave it a look of cheer.

Two rooms on each side of this dining-room I used as chambers. They were also attractive. I had carried up a drugget and some rugs to be scattered about. Beds well made, with clean linen sheets and pure Marseilles quilts, give an air of comfort to any room. Across the lower sashes were hung ruffles of Swiss muslin, so light that the least current of air could blow them back and forth. There was nothing of any cost, but all suggestive of comfort. For wash-stands and dressing-tables, the boys turned barrels bottom upward, and nailed upon each one a few short planks. By tacking a ruffle of red curtain calico around to hide the barrel, and then covering the top with a clean towel, the rooms were still further furnished.

The boys also took the large boxes in which had come the groceries and china, and by standing them on end and fitting the tops within as shelves, made very convenient places for clothing. Several of these boxes, nailed securely to the pantry wall, with supports underneath, served as china closets. In every room we had a tin basin and dipper, which the girl kept looking like silver; a tin candlestick, a white wooden bucket for clean, and a painted one for waste, water. The buckets were kept sweet by constant scrubbing and airing. I am sure we all appreciated these crude arrangements far more than we did the rosewood furniture at home. Nothing could have been more simple, or more comfortable.

One idea I had in having a country home, was to gather in all the children of our families. Brothers and sisters grow up together united. They finally marry and separate. Then their children, from being apart, know but little of one another, and the strong family feeling that existed among the parents finds no place among the offspring. Then, too, petty jealousies spring up, which can only be avoided by mutual intercourse. I hoped to make my home common ground for all my nephews and nieces, of whom there were about twenty. These children,



as in all large families, were differently situated in life. I wished to bind them together by common pursuits and amusements, so that their future lives might be influenced for their mutual good. I wanted the boys to go swimming together in the river that ran by at the railway station, to play ball, to milk the cows, to race rabbits, and to grow hardy and self-reliant in an honest rivalry of outdoor life.

The expenses of the first summer at my country home were \$445.52. This included rent, fuel, hire of cow, the furnishing of the house, and, in fact, every expense of every sort and description. I economized in nothing essential. The table was most abundant, and of the very best. A butcher came twice a week, and he always saved for me his best cuts. The price of meat was much less than in the city, and since the cattle were not overdriven, we found the quality of country beef better than that of the city. Chickens were our main dependence, and I kept from ten to twelve dozen running around to grow and fatten.\* Milk, fresh eggs, and good butter we had in abundance. For the hire of a little heifer for the nine and one-half weeks of our stay (July 10 to September 15), I was charged three dollars, and twenty cents per gallon for extra milk. The second year, for two cows for fourteen weeks, I paid ten dollars. They did not give a great quantity of milk, but it was as much as we could use. My boys, with two cousins about the same age, milked the heifer, took entire charge of horse and carriage, and hauled all the water (except for drinking) up the hill in a barrel. They never seemed to grow discouraged, but were proud of what they could do. The heifer was so wild at first that I was twice obliged to have a man come and milk her; but finally, by feeding her on corn, brushing off the flies, and treating her very gently, the boys made her perfectly tame and quiet. They were very happy over their success, and each afternoon took great delight in giving all the children as much warm milk as they could drink.

\* They were never eaten until after being kept in a cleansing coop a week. This makes the greatest difference in the quality of the meat, for chickens, unlike turkeys, will eat all sorts of unclean things.

Nothing is lighter and more nourishing for children than fresh, warm milk.

During this first summer our number varied, from my own family of four and two servants, to as many as fifteen. Almost every Saturday some of the family would come up to see after the children, and remain until Monday. These visits gave us all great pleasure. We were never happier, and the children all improved in health.

During the heat of the day, while the little ones were asleep, I read aloud. My children had been trained to love Shakespeare. After I had read them four historical plays, commencing with "Richard II.," I could turn back to some part at random, and when I had read five or six lines, they could tell me the speaker, the whole scene, and in which play it was. When I reread the plays the second summer, they recollected far more than I did, and could always tell me what was coming next. The trouble was with the other children, who had not been trained in the same habits of thought and attention. I read to them "Tom Brown at Rugby," and we had a little botany, which two of the boys delighted in, but the others hated. They would say, "Now, please, give us a feast of Shakespeare." After dinner the grown members of the family studied a work on architecture, and I always examined them one day on what had been read the day before. The second summer we had Kinglake's "Crimean War," which helped us to understand the news in the daily papers. Old sets of "Littell's Living Age," in loose numbers, were very valuable, and we found in them many articles on the "Eastern Question." I have found that, to make reading aloud profitable to children, it is necessary to talk over every part. Read a few lines and then ask them the meaning. Get their curiosity excited as to what comes next, and ask what they would do under the same circumstances. I know of nothing more pleasant than reading to children in this way. It takes time and patience, but they can be taught to be interested in almost anything.

We had no neighbors except Judge Snowden's family, and we never felt the need of any more. The days seemed short,

and flew by in constant change of pleasant occupations. The boys became adepts in swimming and rowing, and once a week would drive the carriage into the river to give it a good washing. They never neglected greasing the wheels or washing the harness. There was a pasture-field of forty acres for both horse and cow; but the horse was fed twice a day on corn which the boys bought from the neighbors. The carriage was a pleasure, but not at all a necessity; being near the cars, I preferred having none, but my family would not consent. The stable was useless, for both horse and cow lived in the pasture, only sometimes taking refuge from storms by going under the carriage-shed. We burned wood in profusion, and generally had a little fire burning on the dining-room hearth. I thought this kept the house dry and healthy. There was never the least sickness among the children. They ate heartily and slept well. We had breakfast every morning at quarter after six, and family prayer at nine, after the rush of morning work was over. The little children were never wakened for breakfast. On Sunday, there being no church near, we had the Episcopal service at home, and it was touching to see such a number of children joining in the worship. Never, either during the week or on Sunday, were the servants excused from being present. If they were not ready, we waited until they were.

On leaving the house in the fall, everything was carried either into the upper rooms or into the dry cellar. The paper blinds were rolled up high out of sight, and every window nailed down. Two objects were gained by this. The sunshine had free access to keep the house dry and pure, and tramps, by looking in at their pleasure and only seeing empty rooms, would be apt to wander farther on. When we went back, May 25th of the following year, we found everything in good order and undisturbed.

This second summer, the farmer from whom we had bought vegetables the year before having moved away, we concluded to have a garden of our own. I hired a man to plow and put the barren ground in order. After this was done and all the seeds were planted,—with the exception of two days'

hoeing by this man,—the boys did all the work in raising the vegetables. As the weather grew warm I limited them to one hour in the early morning, and on the warmest days I kept them entirely out of it. Never was there a common country-garden more free from weeds, and never were there boys more pleased or interested. To give my older son's own impressions, I copy from a letter he wrote to his sister in August, while she was away on a trip to Niagara and elsewhere:

“DEAR SISTER: You ought to see our little chickens, ten of them, little beauties. We had twelve, but two died. We are getting seven vegetables out of the garden,—cylmings, corn, cabbage, tomatoes, onions, string-beans, and beets, and we have one egg-plant the size of two eggs. Is not that a nice lot? All the birds are molting, and so none of them sing. Nell has lost all her tail-feathers, but they are growing out again. You don't know how much I want to see you. You have been away *so* long. We are going to have thirty-three ears of corn for dinner; is not that a lot? The mocking-bird has to stay on the porch all the time, for he sings all night. Little Robby can walk from one end of the porch to the other. When he is out in his carriage we have to keep billy-goat tied, for fear he might butt him over. I write so little now that my hand fairly aches.

“YOUR AFFECTIONATE BROTHER.”

Attached to this letter was one from myself, from which I shall copy portions to show how we lived:

“Your aunt Mary and baby are up for a visit of two weeks. We have delightful meals. I have lately bought six dozen chickens, and we have all the most delicious vegetables, and cream from two cows. We skim two crocks of milk for dinner, one for supper, and one for breakfast. Then we have the richest cottage-cheese made yellow with cream, and plenty of cooked apples and stewed pears. Every meal is abundant, and the children eat with natural, healthy appetites. This country air is toning them all up. The ice is out, but we have had the dairy cleaned and use that. You know how icy cold the water is; it keeps everything cold and sweet. In spite of the steep hill, I delight in going down to skim the cream and help Chloe up with the butter and milk. Each of the children tries to carry something, and then I tell them we could hardly get along but for their help. Kitty never murmurs at pulling fat Alexander up with one hand, though in the other she has a bucket of water. John is here grubbing up the old currant-bushes, and getting one end of the garden cleared for strawberries, which the boys will plant in September. We want to put



in a quantity of blackberry and raspberry vines this fall. \* \* \* Your aunt Mary thinks her little girls very much improved. I am so glad to have a chance to help them grow up to be healthy girls. They have been here over two months now, and I shall try to keep them till September, or perhaps till I go down. \* \* \* You ought to see the new dormitory. It is the long garret, with two new windows cut in one end. It is airy and comfortable. Every night I go up to see the five boys in bed, and every time I am glad they are in such good healthy quarters. \* \* \*

"The boys collect all the vegetables, and take great pride in them after their months of labor. The pigeons are so tame now that they come when the boys call them, and eat around their feet, and under their chairs."

I have found that with all children it is necessary to throw yourself into their pursuits, and when their interest flags, take the lead yourself. Nothing helped our boys in the garden like going out myself with a hoe. Soon all would follow, and then when once they were started and interested I could leave. It was far better than finding fault with them. But the trouble was, I would become so interested myself that I could not stop. The exercise certainly was good, and the boys loved to have my interest in the growth of every vegetable. They measured a water-melon so often, to see its daily growth, that they broke its stem by constant lifting. I had to look every day at the marks on the poles which showed the growth of the beans, a general interest being felt to see which would reach the top first.

About once in two weeks we had a party, and called it a "*fête champêtre*." Though the Snowden children came two and three times a week, and often stopped to supper,—for I found the larger the family, the more convenient it was to have them stay,—still the high-sounding name, and the formal invitation to them and to two other little children, made the greatest difference to them all. The only addition to the supper was cake, the making of which was watched by all the children. The girls were in their best percales, with sashes, which were held in reserve for these great occasions. On the Fourth of July we had a display of flags in the day and of fire-works at night.

This second summer was as successful as the first. Our last week, when the family was small, was memorable by my boys making nine pounds of delicious butter in four churnings. They made the churn out of a stone jar, and by placing it in a crock of cold water, which water they constantly changed, the butter came yellow and firm. Their pleasure at the result was delightful to see.

We left September 2d, very unwillingly; but the children had to come home for school and for their visit to the Centennial. We were all in good health, and we had lived innocent lives.

For weeks there were fifteen in the family, and for a short time nineteen. As before, I had economized in nothing, and we lived in abundance. The entire cost for the fourteen weeks was \$542.32.

Now, in these warm days, we are again with longing eyes looking to our country home. The boys are collecting eggs, preparatory to setting their hens. They hope to go up in May with about fifty little chickens. Last spring I paid for one black rooster and six black hens, \$5.25. From the 18th of April till the 18th of June the hens laid one hundred and ninety eggs, and they have been at it ever since, only stopping for a few weeks about Christmas. The boys are now buying more pigeons to add to their country stock, and I am glad to see them interested in anything that will take them out of their workshop into the fresh air. They expect to raise ducks and geese from eggs they will put under their hens. A farmer has an order to save some partridge eggs, should he find a nest. They hope to hatch them and have some tiny birds.

I have taken the place again at the same price,—\$120 the year until next October,—with the privilege of three more years, if I continue satisfied. Going as early as May, the children will come into the city every day for school. The railroad fare will be \$5.00 a month for each child.

I only dread the trouble with the water, and long to have an arrangement by which it can be drawn up in a bucket suspended from a wire. This plan is in successful operation in

many places, but I cannot find out who puts them up, or where the castings can be had.

I have now told my story, hoping that when parents see how simple a thing it really can be made,—this having a country home of one's own,—and what great advantages it possesses, many will, for the sake of their children, take it into serious consideration.

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### AN AGREEABLE GUEST.

THE longest visit that we read of in modern days was one which Dr. Isaac Watts made at Lord Abney's, in the Isle of Wight. He went to spend a fortnight, but they made him so happy that he remained a beloved and honored guest for *forty years*.

Few of us would care to make so long a visit as that, but it might be worth the while for us all to try and learn the secret of making ourselves agreeable and welcome guests. To have "a nice time" when one is visiting is delightful, but to leave behind us a pleasant impression is worth a great deal more.

An agreeable guest is a title which any one may be proud to deserve. A great many people, with the best intentions and the kindest hearts, never receive it, simply because they have never considered the subject, and really do not know how to make their stay in another person's home a pleasure instead of an inconvenience. If you are one of these thoughtless ones, you may be sure that, although your friends are glad to see you happy, and may enjoy your visit on that account, your departure will be followed with a sigh of relief, as the family settle down to their usual occupations, saying, if not thinking, that they are glad the visit is over.

A great many different qualities and habits go to make up the character of one whom people are always glad to see, and these last must be proved while we are young, if we expect to

wear them gracefully. A young person whose presence in the house is an inconvenience and a weariness at fifteen, is seldom a welcome visitor in after-life.

The two most important characteristics of a guest are tact and observation, and these will lead you to notice and do just what will give pleasure to your friends in their different opinions and ways of living. Apply in its best sense the maxim, "When you are in Rome, do as the Romans do."

Unless you have some good reason for not doing so, let your friends know the day, and, if possible, the hour when you expect to arrive. Surprises are very well in their way, but there are few households in which it is quite convenient to have a friend drop in without warning for a protracted visit. If they know that you are coming, they will have the pleasure of preparing for you and looking forward to your arrival, and you will not feel that you are disturbing any previous arrangements which they have made for the day.

Let your friends know, if possible, soon after you arrive, about how long you mean to stay with them, as they might not like to ask the question, and would still find it convenient to know whether your visit is to have a duration of three days or three weeks. Take with you some work that you have already begun, or some book that you are reading, that you may be agreeably employed when your hostess is engaged with her own affairs, and not be sitting about idle, as if waiting to be entertained, when her time is necessarily taken up with something else. Make her feel that, for a small part at least of every day, no one needs to have any responsibility about amusing you.

A lady who is charming as a guest and as a hostess once said to me: "I never take a nap in the afternoon when I am at home, but I do when I am visiting, because I know what a relief it has sometimes been to me to have company lie down for a little while, after dinner."

Try, without being too familiar, to make yourself so much like one of the family that no one shall feel you to be in the way; and, at the same time, be observant of those small



courtesies and kindnesses which all together make up what the world agrees to call good manners.

Regulate your hours of rising and retiring by the customs of the house. Do not keep your friends sitting up until later than usual, and do not be roaming about the house an hour or two before breakfast. If you choose to rise at an early hour, remain in your own room until near breakfast-time, unless you are very sure that your presence in the parlor will not be unwelcome. Write in large letters, in a prominent place in your mind, "BE PUNCTUAL." A visitor has no excuse for keeping a whole family waiting, and it is unpardonable negligence not to be prompt at the table. Here is a place to test good manners, and any manifestation of ill-breeding here will be noticed and remembered. Do not be too ready to express your likes and dislikes for the various dishes before you. The wife of a certain United States Senator, once visiting acquaintances at some distance from her native wilds, made a lasting impression upon the family by remarking at the breakfast-table that "she should starve before she would eat mush," and that she "never heard of cooking mutton before she came East."

If you are tempted to go to the other extreme, and sacrifice truth to politeness, read Mrs. Opie's "Tale of Potted Sprats," and you will not be likely to be insincere again.

It is well to remember that some things which seem of very little importance to you may make an unpleasant impression upon others, in consequence of a difference in early training. The other day, two young ladies were heard discussing a gentleman who had a great many pleasant qualities. "Yes," said one, "he *is* very handsome, but he *does* eat pie with his knife." Take care that no trifle of that kind is recalled when people are speaking of you.

Keep your own room in order, and do not scatter your belongings all over the house. If your friends are orderly, it will annoy them to see your things out of place; and if they are not, their own disorder will be enough without adding yours.

Make up your mind to be entertained with what is designed to entertain you. If your friends invite you to join them in an excursion, express your pleasure and readiness to go, and do not act as though you were conferring a favor instead of receiving one. No visitors are so wearisome as those who do not meet half-way whatever proposals are made for their pleasure. Be contented to amuse yourself quietly in the house, or to join in any outside gayeties to which you are invited, and show by your manner that you enjoy both.

If games are proposed, do not say that you will not play, or "would rather look on"; but join with the rest, and do the best you can. Never let a foolish feeling of pride, lest you should not make so good an appearance as the others, prevent your trying.

If you are not skillful, you will at least show that you are good-natured, and that you do not think yourself modest when you are only proud.

If you have any skill in head or fingers, you will never have a better time to use it than when you are visiting; only, whatever you do, do well, and do not urge your offers of assistance after you see that it is not really desired. Mrs. Poyser, who is one of George Eliot's best characters, says: "Folks as have no mind to be o' use have allays the luck to be out o' the road when there 's anything to be done." If you do not find any place to be useful, you may be tolerably sure that it is your own fault.

I heard a gentleman say of a young lady whose small affectations were undergoing a sharp criticism: "Well, whatever you may say of her, she is certainly more ready to make herself useful than any other young lady who visits here. If I lose my glasses, or mislay the newspaper, or want a stitch taken, she is always ready." And I shall never forget the impression which a young lady made upon me, as I saw her sit idly rocking backward and forward, complacently surveying the young friends she was visiting as they were hurrying to finish peeling a basket of peaches.

While visiting, remember that you meet many who are strangers to you, and do not seem to you especially attractive, but who may still be dear and valued friends of the family; and be cautious about making criticisms upon them. Be friendly and cordial toward those whom you meet, and try to show that you are ready to like them. Whatever peculiarities you may observe, either in the family or its guests, which strike you as amusing, be careful that you do not sin against the law of love by repeating little things to their disadvantage, which you have found out while you were admitted to the sanctuary of the home.

Do not ask questions which people would rather not answer, and be careful not to speak of anything which will bring up painful recollections, or be likely to cause unpleasant forebodings. The old proverb expresses this in few words: "Never mention a rope in the family of a man who has been hanged."

If your own home is in any way better and handsomer than your friends', do not say anything which may seem like making invidious comparisons, or allow them to see that you miss any of the conveniences to which you have been accustomed.

Be careful about making any unnecessary work for others, and do not ask even the servants to do for you anything which you ought to do for yourself. The family had their time filled up before you came, and, do what you will, you are an extra one, and will make some difference.

Provide yourself, before you leave home, with whatever small supplies you are likely to need, so that you need not be borrowing ink, pens, paper, envelopes, postage-stamps, etc.

It may seem unnecessary to speak of the need of taking due care of the property of others, but having just seen a young lady leaning forward with both elbows upon the open pages of a handsome volume which was resting upon her knees, I venture to suggest that you do not leave any marred wall, or defaced book, or ink-stains, or mark of a wet tumbler, to remind your friends of your visit long after it has ended.

Do not forget, when you go away, to express your appreciation of the kindness which has been shown you, and when you reach home inform your friends by letter of your safe arrival.

If you follow faithfully these few suggestions, you will probably be invited to go again; and if you do not thank me for telling you these plain truths, perhaps the friends whom you visit will be duly grateful.

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### *HOW THE MONEY WAS MADE FOR HER SUMMER'S JOURNEY.*

WHEN Miss Eliot went last summer from New York to Boston by sea, and from there to Prince Edward's Island, her friends said that it was evident that the lessons she had given in drawing had paid her, or she could not have afforded the trip. When they heard her glowing stories of what she had seen, and had looked over her sketches, they all wished they could take the same trip; but to travel they must have money. They were partly right about the drawing-lessons, for they certainly helped her to be independent; but this trip was rather the result of discrimination in outlay than any increase in income, as her father had given her the money for the journey. The family had always been in the habit of going away in the summer, so Miss Eliot knew most popular resorts and many pleasant farm-houses by heart, but she had never traveled. This summer, however, she was tired; she longed for a sea voyage, and for freer, more active life than she would have if she went with her mother and sister to Long Branch. So she thought about it. She had some faith in the possibility of good things, and she was experienced enough to know that the real cost of a summer campaign is more often in the preparation for it than in the campaign itself. The Eliot girls



could not afford expensive clothes, but they would not have thought of going to Long Branch without some special preparation, and so Miss Eliot did a little rough sum for herself:

Summer silk dress, about.....	\$25.00
Black grenadine           “ .....	22.00
Piqué overdress           “ .....	7.00
Lawn dress                 “ .....	4.25
Hat                         “ .....	5.00
Boots                      “ .....	7.50
	<hr/>
	\$70.75

This did not include the making up of her dresses, the altering of some old ones, possibly one more new one, and all the numerous items that go to make up a toilet. Of course these expenditures would be good as an investment for the future, but on the whole she determined to go to Prince Edward's, if her father was willing. When she talked to her sister about it, Margery preferred Long Branch and new clothes, but she did not object to keeping an account of what she spent in getting the clothes, and so it ended in her going to the sea-shore with \$156.72 worth of new dresses, etc., while Miss Eliot started off on her trip with a gift from her father of the same amount in her red pocket-book, and some necessary but not new clothing in her small trunk. Upon this trunk, and her general outfit, Miss Eliot had expended no little thought in the direction of condensation. For her traveling dress she wore her brown *de beige*, but thinking that it might get wet or soiled, she packed a last summer's linen. Her brown hat she retrimmed; her winter boots, too heavy for Long Branch, were just right for traveling; her castor gloves she bought, and so, with her umbrella fastened to her side, and a soft blanket shawl and a gossamer water-proof in her shawl-strap, she was equipped for active service. In her hand-valise she had a few necessary articles of clothing, including a chintz wrapper to wear at night on the sea, her brown Holland toilet-case, books, etc. In her trunk she put plenty of underwear, including light flannels, a black silk dress for hotel dinners if the weather should prove cool, and a French muslin overdress

to wear with the skirt if it should be warm. She had pretty lace and ribbons, and some jewelry, and a pair of Newport ties.

They went out to sea, and saw sunsets out of sight of land; they sailed up the Bay of Fundy, and saw its rough and picturesque shores in the early morning light. She spent a day up the lovely river of St. John's. She sailed and sketched on the Gulf of St. Lawrence; and, coming home, she skirted the coast of Maine, and then bounced and rattled over its "smoothest road" as she spent a day in the stage-coach, going through its woods from Lubec to Machiasport. She saw Mount Desert, and brought home memories of its fine entrance, and saw a storm among the Isles of Shoals.

At the hotels she had displayed no fine clothes, but she had appeared the more lady-like, and had certainly looked pretty in her silk and soft laces; and, in traveling, her own enjoyment had heightened the pleasure of her companions. When she counted up her expenses from her little note-book, where descriptions, statistics, sketches, and figures were all pleasantly mixed together, she found she had spent \$178.33, so her scholars had helped her to \$21.61 of the money.

Margery was at home when her sister came back, and full of stories about the Madison girls and Bradley boys, and of drives and walks by the sea; but her stories grew commonplace by the side of those that the traveler had to tell. So next summer Margery and her sister intend to make a trip together, and Miss Eliot thinks they can spend less money, and have even more fun. Such expeditions, it is true, do not replenish their wardrobes if the money has to be saved out of pretty dresses, but they argue that these pleasures endure in fashion for a life-time, and that is more than can be said for Margery's pretty gray-and-black silk, which cost as much as the trip as far as St. John's, and already shows that it was made last year.

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*SUGGESTIONS TO OCEAN TRAVELERS.*

THE traveler who intends to cross the ocean for the first time usually has some perplexity in selecting a line of steamers, and when he has decided upon the line, the perplexity recurs in picking a desirable vessel out of its fleet. There are steamers and steamers,—some uncomfortable ones in good lines, and some comfortable ones in bad lines, and each line has two or three superior in size and speed to others of its fleet. The fastest attract the fullest complement of passengers during the summer season, and applications for berths in them should be made at least five or six weeks before the intended sailing. But, unless time is more precious than it is likely to be with the tourist, or unless sea-sickness is felt to be inevitable, and the briefest possible voyage is the greatest desideratum, the writer would advise the selection of an unfashionable vessel—supposing, of course, that its unpopularity is the consequence, not of unsafety or antiquity, but, as is often the case, of inferior engine power. The steamers of a thousand horse-power which speed from Sandy Hook to Queens-town in eight days are invariably overcrowded in June and July; two dinners are served daily in the saloon for different sets of passengers; the stewards are so overworked that, be they angelically well disposed, they cannot give proper attention to every passenger, and the decks are so thronged that promenading is next to impossible. But the steamers that are two or three days longer, accomplishing an easy two hundred and fifty miles a day, usually afford better state-rooms, and, in most particulars, greater comfort.

The cost of the voyage varies from sixty to one hundred dollars; but it is not less than eighty dollars in any of the first-class lines. One hundred dollars will secure an outside room for two persons,—that is, one hundred dollars each; and for eighty dollars a passage is given in an outside room containing four persons, or in an inside room containing two. The outside rooms are provided with “ports” or windows which can be opened in smooth weather, and the occupants

may dress in the summer mornings with an exhilarating breeze blowing in upon them from the sea; while the inside rooms receive all their light and ventilation from the deck. But a room containing four is so exceedingly inconvenient, especially in tempestuous weather, that if the traveler limits his fare to eighty dollars, we advise him to take the inside room with one companion, although it is sure to be breezeless in hot weather and dark at all times. Four persons endeavoring to dress in a space about eight feet square, when the vessel is pitching and rolling in the "roaring forties," do not succeed without heroic patience and innumerable mishaps.

The cool, fresh air admitted by the ports usually tempts the occupants of outside rooms to keep them open, and to complain when the stewards close them; but it is never safe to retire without seeing that they are screwed up.

The bath-room of the modern steamer is one of its greatest luxuries, but if there are many passengers, and especially if the passengers include a number of young Englishmen or Canadians, to whom the morning "tub" is the invariable attendant of breakfast, it is necessary to see the bedroom steward as soon as you go on board, and have the hour recorded at which you want to bathe. The water is cold, but it is the veritable brine of mid-ocean, and the chill can be taken off by a can of hot fresh water, which the steward will obtain from the galley.

The most important consideration, however, is the location of the state-room. In old-fashioned vessels all the sleeping accommodations are "aft," that is astern, where, naturally, the pitch of the steamer is most perceptible, and where, in heavy weather, the propeller, as it strikes the water, produces a concussion terrible to the nerves and annihilative of repose. But in the steamers of more recent construction, the saloon, ladies' cabin, and state-rooms are amidships, and if the traveler is solicitous about his comfort he will see to it that this is the case in the vessel which he selects for his voyage. Even when the rooms are amidships, there are discomforts peculiar



to that arrangement; but if applications for berths are made in season, and if the plan of the steamer is consulted at the agent's office, a location may be obtained where the pulsations of the powerful engines are inaudible, and where in the heaviest weather the only motion apparent is a gentle heaving. Choose a room some distance aft or forward of the engine, and see that it is not in proximity to the closets. At the same time, if the reader is fastidious, he should be prepared to pay for a first-class berth; while if he is nervous, seasick, and irritable, the best ship built will still seem uncomfortable.

Having had a state-room assigned you, put as little as possible into it. Any box or valise that is not absolutely wanted during the voyage should be stowed in the hold, and marked accordingly when it is sent to the wharf. Sensible and economical people do not "dress" at sea. Old clothes may be worn out on the voyage; new ones are sure to be spoiled by the sea air and the paint and grease which are prevalent on the cleanest ships afloat. Be fully prepared for extreme changes of temperature. Leaving New York, and for several days afterward, you may have warm weather, and suddenly a wintry cold may come which will necessitate woolen underwear and over-wraps,—a transposition as familiar in July or August as in April or May. A hanging dressing-case of brown holland backed with oil-cloth, with pockets for sponge, comb and brush, etc., etc., is useful, and may be swung from the wall of your room. A steamer chair is also necessary for a lady or an elderly person, although it is superfluous to a strong young man.

The seats at table are assigned either at the office of the company when the berth is engaged, or by the chief steward on board, and experienced travelers say that a position near the captain or purser is advantageous; these officers usually select personal acquaintances for their nearest neighbors, and others who are not of the elect have no more right to insist upon a particular seat than they have to take possession of a state-room which they have not engaged; however, they are sure to find every attention paid to their reasonable wishes.

As a matter of fact, one seat is not better than another; the table is loaded, and the stewards are untiring in their courtesies.

Before going on board, provide yourself with some loose silver and gold, as American currency is heavily discounted by the pursers. Be at the wharf at least an hour before the time of sailing, and if your departure is to be in the busy season, engage your passage as far ahead as possible.

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### LADIES AT SEA.

IT almost always happens with ladies who go to sea for the first time that, in spite of the advice of friends and their own personal care and foresight, they find their outfit lacking in something essential to comfort—something whose lack presses so heavily on a half-sick condition, that all the journey through there is a reiterated lament of “Why did I never think?” or, “Why did not some one tell me?” It is useless to attempt universal rules for experiences which must differ with each individual, but in the following simple suggestions somebody new to the sea may find comfort.

*First.* State-room baggage should be *compact*. A small hat-box, or a valise which can be pushed under the berth, are least in the way. A trunk which *must* stand in the middle of the state-room becomes a serious affliction when the vessel pitches and throws you upon its sharp corners.

*Second.* By all means provide yourself with one or two linen bags, made with pockets like a shoe-bag, and carry a hammer and tacks with which to nail them against the side of the state-room. These convenient little catch-alls, into which your watch, slippers, brushes, etc., can be crammed when not in use, are indispensable to comfort at sea.

*Third.* Let your traveling dress be old and warm. Finery is useless at sea. However clean the ship, there is something

at every turn which rubs off and soils—fresh paint, newly oiled wood-work, newly greased chains. The brasses spot you with verdigris. Sprinkles of salt water visit you now and then. Soup *will* spill when the table stands at an angle of forty-five degrees: it may even chance of a stormy evening that a goose or a leg of mutton, flying from under the carving-knife, shall alight in your lap! Under these circumstances it is comforting to have on a gown whose spoiling is of no consequence.

But whether of choice fabric or of hodden-gray, it is above all essential that the garment be warm. The ocean climates are cool even in the heats of summer. You want woolen under-garments, thick boots and gloves, wraps of all kinds, and a hood to tie over your hat. With these precautions you can be comfortable for many hours each day on deck; and where there is the least disposition to nausea, fresh air is the surest and speediest remedy.

*Fourth.* We would advise all persons whose sailing qualities are untested to carry with them to sea a cane-bottomed reclining chair with a long back, also a warm rug to wrap around the feet while using it. Some of the steam-ships provide deck chairs for their passengers, but they are not of this comfortable kind, and many vessels carry none at all. A person of steady head does very well cuddled into corners of the deck, against the sails, etc.; but to many of us, the command of a comfortable chair makes all the difference between being able to keep in the air or being forced to retreat to the close cabins below. There are arrangements made for storing these chairs in Liverpool, so that they shall be ready for the journey back.

*Fifth.* It is unnecessary to carry many stores to sea, nor, indeed, does any one know, until the moment of actual experiment, what is or is not likely to be acceptable in his or her particular case. Fruit, especially grapes, is almost always grateful; a box of Albert biscuits may serve a good turn, and a few fresh lemons are almost sure to do so, as the lemonade on shipboard is usually made of concentrated lemon, and lacks

the acid freshness which is so reviving. Another thing which every sea-traveler will like to have is a box or bottle of good fresh French prunes. They are so very grateful and wholesome that, if your fellow-travelers know you have them, they will probably be gone before the end of the voyage. It is well to be provided with a little good brandy in case of extreme exhaustion, and persons who can bear champagne sometimes find that a small quantity, made very cold with ice, is the only thing that will stay down after extreme illness, and that it seems to restore the tone of the stomach and prepare it for the reception of food. It may be well for such to provide themselves with a few half-pint bottles, as the steamer people have a habit of being out of everything but quart bottles, and so little is generally taken at a time, that the wine spoils before it can be used. Champagne, however, cannot be universally recommended. Indeed, nothing can. There is no predicting what will or will not suit anybody. With seasickness more than any other phase of mortal experience, the adage holds true that what is one man's meat is another man's poison.

Smelling-salts should be remembered. Cologne and aromatic vinegar are often excessively disagreeable to persons who are ill. A warm woolen wrapper and knitted slippers should be provided for use at night, and an India-rubber bottle to hold hot water and keep the feet warm in bed.

We would advise all persons going to Europe to select a ship which has the reputation of a *dry deck*, and which has saloon or deck state-rooms. Nobody who has not tried it can appreciate the immense difference in comfort of being able to keep the port-hole of the state-room open in all tolerable weather. Nothing but fresh air enables one to forget the ship's smell, and to do this is the great *desideratum* at sea.

Some people ask their friends, and some are so thoughtful as, unasked, to write a note or two to be read at intervals during the voyage. The captain or the stewardess takes charge of these missives, and their unexpected reception, five days or eight days out, makes a pleasant break in the monotony of the transit.



Lastly, do not expect any pleasure at sea. Prepare your minds for the worst, for ten or eleven or twelve miserable days, and go resolved to endure all with patience. Then each day free from illness, each meal swallowed with relish, each calm morning or smooth moon-lighted evening, will assume the aspect of an agreeable surprise; something not counted on or hoped for, even by the kind farewell voices which wished you "*Bon voyage.*"

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### HOW TO CAMP OUT AT THE BEACH.

WHERE shall we spend our next summer vacation, boys? Perhaps you do not consider this a very pressing problem as yet, but you will think it so by the time the hot, bright days begin to make the school hours tedious.

So we propose to take time by the forelock, and tell you now of a real jolly way of spending a part of those vacation weeks.

Some of you will go to Saratoga, or Long Branch, or the White Mountains, with your parents, although such a way of spending a vacation requires a heavier pocket-book than many of us possess. Yet, when we get back next fall, and school begins again, we will warrant you that those who go with us will bring back such reports of a grand good time that you will all want to join our party next year.

One great advantage of our plan is that it costs so little that almost any of us can carry it out, and when you ask Papa about it, and he looks over his spectacles and shakes his head, as much as to say, "I can't afford it," you can tell him that it will not cost him much more than if you staid at home.

Then, if Mamma looks troubled and fears you will catch cold, and Aunt Jane warns you not to get drowned, and sister Kate suggests that "there will be lots of bugs and snakes and ugly things creeping about," you can tell them that the man

who told you the plan has been there himself and knows all about it, and that those lions in the way will all be found to be chained when you get to them.

Now, before we conjure up any more of the objections which the home friends will raise, it may be important to tell you that our plan is to take a tent and camp out for a few weeks upon the sea-shore in the most approved "Robinson Crusoe" style, with the exception that we shall have Tom, and Dick, and Harry for our companions instead of Friday and the goat.

In the first place, you must know that this is not to be an ordinary visit to the beach, such as any one with plenty of money can make, but we are going to leave our good clothes and our every-day life at home as much as possible, and take, besides our old clothes, a large stock of good-nature and a determination to be pleased with whatever we find.

And we expect to bring back sunburnt cheeks, robust health, and the remembrance of some charming vacation weeks.

In the first place, we must be careful about selecting our party. We are to rough it, you know,—to catch our own fish and cook them, too; to sleep on the ground, and perhaps get wet and cold, without grumbling. So we want five or six good fellows in our party, but no babies, or dandies, or fault-finders.

The next thing to be thought of is the tent. This should be large enough to hold us all comfortably, as we lie stretched out at night, with a little spare room for our stores. An A tent is the best—that is, one with a ridge-pole, supported at each end by uprights—since this gives more available room than a circular tent with one pole in the center.

This we can hire of any sail-maker for about three dollars per week.

To keep us warm through the chilly nights, which we almost always find near the sea, we shall want a heavy army blanket, and an old winter overcoat,—no matter how worn,—which we can put on, if necessary, when we go to bed.



BY THE SEA.





Besides these, on account of the dampness, we should have two or three rubber blankets to spread on the ground.

What shall we eat, and what shall we drink? are the next questions of vital importance. The latter question is easily answered by pitching our tent within sight of some good spring or well, but the former demands more attention. In our party we do not intend to fare sumptuously every day; in fact, you will be surprised to know how few things in the edible line are necessary to our comfort. Here is a list, and perhaps even one or two of these might be omitted: Hard tack, salt pork, ham, potatoes, corn meal, coffee, sugar, condensed milk, salt, and pepper.

We have found that a barrel of hard tack will last a party of six between three and four weeks, if they occasionally manage to get a small supply of softer bread.

Of salt pork, which we shall find indispensable in cooking the fish, we shall want at least ten pounds. The corn meal will be useful to roll the fish in before frying them, as well as in making corn dodgers, slapjacks, and johnny-cakes. Indeed, for any of those dishes which our genius for cooking can invent, corn meal is far better than flour, and twenty or even thirty pounds of it will be none too much for a three-weeks' trip. One good-sized ham, six pounds of coffee, twenty pounds of sugar, four cans of condensed milk, and a liberal supply of salt and pepper, will complete our stores. It may be easier to get the potatoes near the camp than to take them from home.

The only things now left to be provided are the cooking utensils. A small sheet-iron stove is much more convenient than a fire-place of stones, and any good tinman will give us just what we want if we ask for a "camp-stove." This, together with coffee-pot, spider, tin pail for boiling potatoes, tin plate, cup, knife, fork, and spoon for each member of the party, ought not to cost more than fifteen dollars.

These articles are all made especially for camping parties, so as to go inside of the stove, which has a handle at each end, and can thus be carried easily, like a small trunk.

Now that our preparations have all been made, let us count the cost before setting out.

Here is the bill, founded on a careful estimate, in about the shape that our treasurer will present it when we come to leave the beach :

Tent for three weeks, at \$3.00 per week.....	\$9.00
Provisions taken with us.....	22.00
Stove and cooking utensils.....	15.00
Fresh provisions bought at the beach, such as eggs, meat, fresh bread, etc.....	15.00
Incidentals .....	20.00
Total.....	<u>\$81.00</u>

This sum divided among six, you see, makes each one's share of the expense \$13.50 for three weeks, or \$4.50 per week.

Of course this does not include the cost of traveling to the camp.

We have taken pains to be minute and accurate in these figures, since we know that their amount will decide the point, in many cases, whether a party can go to the beach or not.

When we have obtained from Aunt Jane her best receipts for fish chowder and fried fish, corn-cakes, coffee, etc., we may consider ourselves ready to start at a moment's notice.

There are precautions to be thought of before we make up our minds to start on such an expedition. In the first place, we must not persuade any boy of very weak constitution to go with us, because, although sea air and bathing would probably be of the greatest service to such a one, our rough mode of living might be an injury to him.

And then, before we go, we should determine to be careful to select a camp where the bathing is safe and where there is no strong undertow. It will be easy enough to do this if we take a little trouble and make proper inquiries.

Now that we are all ready, we are confronted by the important question: Where shall we go?

Very likely you know, or if not, your friends will tell you, of "just *the* place" for a tenting party. In fact, "just the

places" are so numerous along our Atlantic coast, and you to whom we are writing are so widely scattered, that it would be difficult to name any one place that would be convenient for many of you. We would only suggest that you should not choose a fashionable watering-place, but some retired spot, where you will feel at ease and be undisturbed. Moreover, you should spread your canvas on a dry slope, if possible, where the water will not settle, and in a place where the sea breezes will have a fair chance at you too; for they will be a better preventive against mosquitoes and troublesome flies than all the pennyroyal and catsup in the world.

If you were to have an inland camp, the shade of trees would be indispensable, but at the beach the breeze, which almost always springs up before noon from seaward, will serve to keep you cool.

As to fish, there are generally plenty of them, of various kinds, to be found all along our coast, but unless you have a row-boat always at command, you should choose a place with convenient rocks to catch them from. So, to put it in a word, the best place for our camp is a retired spot on a little slope, with bold rocks not far off, jutting out into the sea.

Now that these preliminaries have been settled, we will suppose that, with all our baggage, we have been transported to some such sea-side paradise as we have described. First, up goes the tent. A little practice will make this only a ten minutes' job. Then a committee of two should be detailed to dig a trench six or eight inches deep about the tent, which will carry off the water and save us from a wet skin in rainy weather.

Two more will resolve themselves into a fire-wood brigade, to collect the fuel which Neptune has kindly cast up at our feet in the shape of drift-wood, and the rest will betake themselves to the rocks, with their lines and poles, to catch the supper which we feel pretty confident is awaiting us just beneath those green waves.

For bait we shall use clams, or worms, or mussels,—whichever are most convenient. Sea-worms, or "sand-

worms,"—ugly looking crawlers they are, with almost innumerable legs,—can often be found in great numbers under the stones when the tide is low, and they make excellent bait.

If none of the party understands such matters, almost any fisherman we may meet will teach us how to prepare our fish. Then we must boil the coffee, and lay the fish in the sizzling frying-pan; stir up the johnny-cake, fry the potatoes, and in half an hour we shall be all ready to sit down to a royal supper. At least, this will be the verdict of our sharp appetites.

By the time supper is disposed of, and the dishes are washed up, it will begin to grow dark.

So we will pile the largest pieces of drift-wood on the fire, roll ourselves up in the blankets with our feet to the blaze, and see who can tell the best stories, until the sleep-fairies persuade us to listen to stories of their own in dream-land.

And here, snugly rolled up in our blankets, the last story told, the last conundrum given up, and pleasant dreams hovering around, we propose to leave you.

Our purpose in this article has been accomplished if we have told you *how* to go. Though we might go on for pages describing the pleasures of those three weeks of camp-life, we will not do so, but hope that, before spring comes again, many of you will know by experience, far better than we can tell you, what rare fun there is in a vacation spent at "the tent on the beach."

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### HOW TO ENTERTAIN A GUEST.

**H**INTS are sometimes given to those who wish to be agreeable guests. It seems hardly fair that these should have all the advice, since there are some people whom you enjoy receiving in your own house, who do not know exactly how to manage matters when they have company at their own houses.



Now we will have a little talk on the other side of this question of entertainment, and will speak of those frequent occasions when, as Dr. Holmes says,

“The visitor becomes the visitee.”

There are some people who seem to consider that the obligation is all over when the guest has arrived; but, in reality, it has just begun. You are responsible in some degree for the happiness of your visitors from the time they enter your house until they leave it.

Young girls who have no household cares should feel this obligation especially, but some who do feel it do not know how to make their visitors happy and at ease, and so are uncomfortable all the time they stay, and because they feel that they do not succeed, become discouraged, and at last stop trying. Indeed, there is nothing more discouraging than to feel that you ought to do a thing, and not know exactly how or where to begin; but a few words of help, carefully remembered, may give one a wonderful start in the right direction, so here they are, for those of you who are looking forward to receiving visits from your young friends, with a sort of dread lest they may not have what they call “a good time.”

It is not in the finest houses, or in the gayest places, that guests always enjoy themselves the most. You must have something better than elegant rooms, or all the sights and sounds of a big city, to make your home attractive and pleasant. It is a very low grade of hospitality which trusts in good dinners and fine houses alone. It must be a more subtle charm than either of these which will make your house a home to your friends.

All who have ever made visits themselves know this to be true. A cordial welcome, a readiness to oblige, a kind thoughtfulness of the pleasure of others instead of your own, are three golden rules for a hostess to remember.

Let us look at some of the smaller details.

In the first place, have the guest's room in readiness beforehand, so as not to be constantly supplying deficiencies

after she comes. Put a few interesting books on the table, and writing materials, if it be only a common pencil, pen and ink-bottle, with a few sheets of paper.

Try and make the room show your guest that she was expected, and that her coming was looked forward to with pleasure.

A few flowers on the bureau, an easy-chair by the pleasantest window,—these are some of the little touches which make the plainest room seem home-like.

If your visitors are strangers, or unaccustomed to traveling, try to meet them at the station, or to send some one for them. The sight of a familiar face among the crowd takes away that first homesick feeling which comes to young people as, tired and travel-worn, they step from the boat or cars into the sights and sounds of a strange place. When your friend is once established in the guest-chamber, remember that it becomes her castle, and is as much her own as if she was at home; so do not be running in and out too familiarly without an invitation. Let her feel that when you go there the order of things is reversed, and that then you are the guest and she is the hostess.

Let the pleasures which you choose for her entertainment be of a kind which you are sure she will enjoy. It is no kindness to insist on taking a nervous, timid girl on a fast drive, or out rowing if she is afraid of the water, under the impression that visitors must be taken somewhere, when all the time she is wishing she was on solid ground.

Do not invite people unaccustomed to walking to go on long tramps in the woods, and imagine that because it is easy and pleasant for you it must be so for them, nor take those who are longing for music to see pictures instead, while you are boring the picture-lovers, who may care nothing for music, with concerts. A little ingenuity and observation will give you enough knowledge of your friend's real taste to prevent you from making these mistakes; and, indeed, there will be little danger of your doing this if you keep in mind that the kindest thing you can do is to let guests enjoy themselves in their own

way, instead of insisting that they shall enjoy themselves in yours. If they are fond of books, let them read in peace. I once heard a lady, who thinks herself hospitable, say to a young friend who was looking over a book which lay on the table, "If you want to read that book I will lend it to you to take home, but while you are here I want you to visit with me."

Let your friends alone, now and then, and do not make them feel that you are constantly watching over them. Some people, in trying to be polite, keep their guests in continual unrest. The moment one is comfortably seated, they insist that she shall get up and take a chair which they consider more easy. If she sits in the center of the room, they are sure she cannot see; and if she happens to be by a window, they are afraid the light will hurt her eyes.

There is no place where this is more uncomfortable than at the table. An entire visit is sometimes spoiled for a sensitive guest by having her friends say, from a mistaken kindness, "I am sorry you do not like what we have. Cannot we get you something that you will like better?" or, "How does it happen that you have no appetite?" in this way calling the attention of the whole family to her, and making her feel that they consider her difficult to please. You can get something different for her the next time, if you choose; but do not let her feel that you are too carefully watching her plate.

Do not make visitors feel obliged to account to you for all their comings and goings, or tire them by constant and obvious efforts to entertain them. Unless they are very stupid people, they will prefer to entertain themselves for a part of the time, even although you make them feel that your time is at their disposal whenever they want it. I heard two friends talking, not long ago, of a place where they were both in the habit of visiting.

"How pleasant it is at Mrs. Chauncey's!" said one. "If you want her to go anywhere with you, she always makes you feel that it is just the place where she wishes to go herself."

"Yes," replied the other, "she never makes a fuss over you, but acts as if you did not cause an extra step to be taken, so that you don't worry all the time for fear you are making trouble; and if you want her advice about anything you are doing, she is always ready to stop her own work and show you just what you want to know, and makes you feel as if she was doing it for her own pleasure instead of yours—so much nicer than the way some people have of acting as though you were a constant interruption."

If any excursion is planned, and for any reason you find that your friend will be really happier to stay at home, do not insist upon her going, or allow the party to be broken up on her account. If she would really enjoy more to have you go without her, do not insist upon remaining with her. A friend of mine suffered much by being obliged to go on a steam-boat excursion with a cinder in her eye, because she found that her friends would not do as she wished, and leave her quietly at home, and so, finding that the pleasure of a whole party would be broken up, she endured the pain of going with them, when she might have passed the afternoon in comparative comfort at home.

In the same way, some people will insist upon going about on business with a guest, who would much prefer to go alone.

In regard to conversation, remember sweet George Herbert's rule:

"Entice all neatly to what they know best,  
For so thou dost thyself and him a pleasure."

Talk of the people and things which are most likely to interest those whom you wish to please. You would think it very rude to speak in a language which your visitors did not understand, and it is about the same thing to talk of matters in which they have no interest, and which they know nothing about. Every family has its sayings and jokes, which sound very funny to them, but unless they are explained they mean nothing to a stranger.



Do not ask many questions about your guests' personal affairs, since you are taking them at a great disadvantage when they are in your own house, as they will not like to refuse to answer. Be careful not to be too ready with advice about a visitor's dress. If she asks you what is most suitable to wear on any occasion, tell her frankly; but above all things do not say or do anything which shall indicate that you do think her clothes are not as pretty and fashionable as they ought to be. Sometimes a remark made with the kindest intentions will hurt a sensitive girl's feelings. Those of you who have read "The Diary of Mrs. Kitty Trevellyan" will remember how the little country cousin felt when she saw Evelyn smile at the dresses which had been made with so much care. I once heard a lady speaking of her girlhood, when she made her first visit away from the farm where she had always lived. She said, as she looked back upon it, she always wondered at the kindness of the friends who received her cordially, and took her about with them cheerfully, when her dress was such as to make her laugh heartily at the mere recollection of it.

Before your guest comes, tell your young friends of her expected visit, and ask them to come and see her, and if you invite company to meet her, do it as soon as convenient after she comes, that she may not feel that she is among strangers during the most of her visit. Western people coming East often think they do not receive a very cordial reception, because they meet so few people. A lady remarked to me quite recently that she did not know whether the friends she had been visiting were ashamed of her appearance, or of the appearance of their own neighbors. She concluded it must have been one or the other, as no pains had been taken to have them meet each other.

Do not ask visitors what you shall do to entertain them. That is your business, and you should not be so indolent as to shift it from your own shoulders to theirs. There may be many things which they would enjoy that they will hardly venture to suggest. Try and have a pleasant plan for every

day. It will require thought and care on your part, but it is worth while. I do not mean that you must be constantly taking them to some great entertainment. This is only possible to a few of you. In the most quiet country village some little visit or excursion may be easily found, if it is nothing more than a game of croquet with some pleasant girls, or an interesting story read aloud. Do not make the mistake of thinking that because things are old and dull to you, they are so to every one else. To the city girl, who goes weary and worn-out from the dust and heat of brick walls and pavements, the pleasant stroll in the woods, which is too familiar to please you, may be a fresh delight. So, to the one who has passed all her life among green fields, the sights and sounds of a city may be a great pleasure, even though it may not seem possible to those who are tired of them.

It is surprising how many things there are to see, in any locality, if one will only take the trouble to find them; and the hope of making a visit pleasant to a friend is a good incentive to help one in the search.

If you cannot give your young visitor any elaborate and expensive pleasures, do not be discouraged. The sight of a brilliant sunset from some neighboring hill; a walk down Broadway; the inside of a great factory, where the throbbing looms are full of interest to stranger eyes;—if you have no more wonderful sights than these to show, these are enough.

“Who does the best his circumstance allows,  
Does well, acts nobly. Angels can no more.”

Do not think it necessary to insist upon riding with your friends, if there is not room enough for you without crowding the others. I knew a lady who turned to her sister, who was visiting her, when but one seat in the carriage was left, and said: “Shall you stay at home, or I?” The guest replied that she was willing to give up, if necessary; whereupon the hostess handed her the baby and drove off, although she knew that her sister had particular reasons for wishing to go with the rest. This is almost too bad to tell of, even though it

is true ; but it exactly illustrates how selfishness in trifles may grow upon one unconsciously, until it becomes a controlling power. This fault has been rightly called "the tap-root of all other sins," and is the greatest difficulty we have to overcome in acquiring habits of uniform courtesy and consideration for others.

Do not urge your guests to extend their visits, after they have clearly explained to you that the time has come for them to go, and that it is inconvenient for them to stay longer. Let the subject drop, merely letting them know that you are sorry to part with them. Do not convey the impression that you think you can judge better than they can of their own affairs, by constantly teasing them to stay, and saying that you are sure they could do so if they pleased—

"For still we hold old Homer's rule the best,  
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest."

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# PART IV.

## HOME AMUSEMENTS AND WORK.

### THE GAME OF LAWN TENNIS.

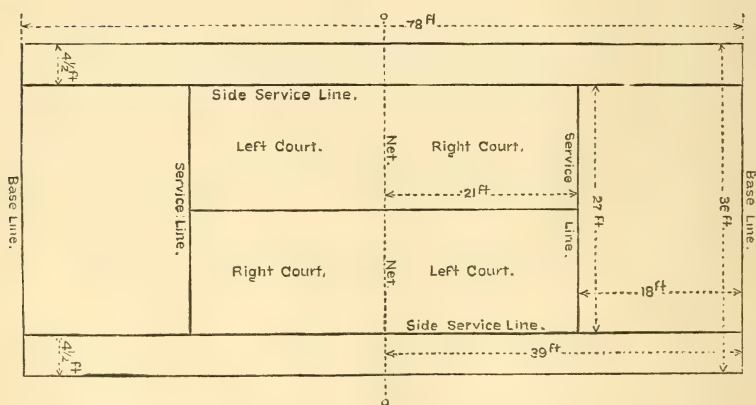


DIAGRAM OF A TENNIS GROUND.

THIS game, which is played at a season when the world appears at its best, combines a most perfect exercise for all the muscles with a singular charm for girls as well as boys, for men and for women. Tennis is a very old game, for Galen—an old Greek medical gentleman—has written of it



to the effect that it was in his time a healthy exercise, and quite nice.

All of us, who enjoy playing ball games, would like to know who had wit enough to invent them. Herodotus thinks they were first played by the Lydians, in the reign of King Atyx, many years before Christ was born, in order to make the people forget their hunger at the time when they were suffering from a dreadful famine. The game does not seem to have that effect now.

Tennis, as it is now played in the tennis courts of England, France, and Italy, was perfected and played, substantially as now, two or three hundred years ago. Swedenborg, who thinks that in the next world there are as many different sorts of heavens as there are different kinds of people, describes one heaven as having "various sports of men and boys, as running, hand-ball, tennis."

It has been called both the "King of Games" and the "Game of Kings." This last name was given it because it was a favorite amusement with princes and nobles, and both in England and France edicts were published forbidding the common people to play it. Henri II. is considered to have been the best tennis-player of all the French kings. Henri of Navarre rose at daylight, after the cruel massacre of St. Bartholomew, to continue a game of tennis. Henry VIII., of England, was passionately fond of it until he became too stout, and you may think it would have been better for him if he had kept up his interest in it and given less attention to matrimony. Edward Halle, the historian, who probably never went to a spelling-school, says of him: "The kynge thys tyme was moche entysed to playe at tennes and at dice, which appetite certayn craftie persones about hym perceyuinge, brought in Frenchmen and Lombardes to make wagers with hym and so lost moch money; but when he perceyued their craft, he eschuyd their compaignie,"—which was a very proper thing for him to do.

Tennis was originally, and still is, played in halls, or courts, built for the purpose at great cost; but the more

modern game of lawn tennis, which is now rapidly becoming popular in this country, can be arranged for a comparatively small cost. Dealers will supply a very good set for fifteen dollars, which will furnish amusement for a club of ten or fifteen persons during several seasons. More expensive and much better sets can, of course, be had, and it may be said of this, as of most other out-of-door sports, that the enjoyment is somewhat in proportion to the excellence of the materials. The only materials absolutely necessary, however, to enable four persons to play an enjoyable game, are four racquets, an India-rubber ball, and a cord suspended between two posts. These can be had, of very good quality, for but little more than half the cost of a "set."

The game needs, first of all, a smooth, level ground, which may be either hard-rolled earth, asphalt, or (probably best of all) well-rolled, closely cut turf. A set consists of four racquets, four India-rubber balls, two and an eighth inches in diameter, and two and a half ounces in weight, and a net attached to two posts, forty-two feet apart, at a height of four feet from the ground at the posts, and sagging to a height of only three feet at the center. The best dimensions for the ground, according to the rules of the Marylebone Cricket Club, are thirty-six wide at the base lines (the end lines), and seventy-eight feet long. The ground is divided lengthwise by a central line, and on either side of this, as one stands facing the net, are the "right court" and the "left court." The courts are again divided by a "service line," drawn parallel to the base lines at a distance of twenty-one feet from the net, and "side service lines" drawn parallel to the side lines and four and a half feet from them. A two-handed game is played altogether within the side service lines, but in four-handed games it is a good *return* to land the ball anywhere within the outside lines. A ground may be easily and quickly measured and marked out with a hundred feet tape-line and some plaster-of-paris and water, or whitewash, or, indeed, almost any substance which will make a distinct line on the turf.

To play the game, sides are formed, each occupying its own side of the net, and the choice of courts may be determined by spinning a racquet in the air, while an opponent calls out "rough" or "smooth" before it falls to the ground with one of those faces uppermost. The side which loses the choice of courts may elect to begin as "hand-in" or "hand-out." Hand-in is the one who "serves" the ball, that is, begins the game (standing with one foot on either side of his base line) by serving (striking) the ball so that it shall pass over the net and come to the ground in the diagonally opposite court between the opponent's service line and the net. If he serves the ball into the wrong court, into the net, or into the diagonally opposite court but beyond the service line, he makes a "fault." Hand-in becomes hand-out (and his opponent becomes the server) when he serves the ball outside of court, or when he makes two successive faults, or when he fails to return the ball so that it shall fall into one of his opponent's courts. When hand-in makes a "good service" (serves the ball into the diagonally opposite court within the service line), the hand-out who is guarding that court attempts with his racquet to strike the ball as it bounds from the ground, so that it shall return over the net into either one of hand-in's courts. Hand-in, or his partner, may then strike the ball before it bounds (that is to say, "volley" it), or after it has bounded once, returning it again within hand-out's courts, and then hand-out has like privileges with it. The ball can thus be struck any number of times back and forth over the net, until one or the other fails to return it, or returns it so vigorously that it falls outside the opponent's courts, or allows the ball to touch any part of his clothes or person.

If it is hand-out, or his partner, who fails to make "good return," or if the service is volleyed, one point is scored for hand-in. Hand-in then again serves the ball (serving from his right and left courts alternately), and if he makes a good service, and makes good returns, until hand-out finally fails to make a good return, another point is scored for hand-in, and he continues to serve and add to his score, until he fails.

When hand-in fails to make a good service, or a good return, or makes two successive faults, no point is scored, and one of his opponents becomes the server.

The side which first scores fifteen points, or "aces," wins the game. But, if both sides reach fourteen, the score is called "deuce." A new point, called "vantage," is then introduced, and either side in order to score game must win two points in succession, called "vantage" and "game."

It is important to remember that when a ball drops on any line, it is considered to have dropped within the court aimed at and bounded by that line; and that it is a good service or a good return, although the ball may have touched the net or either of the posts in passing over them.

Let us now be spectators of a game. Since tennis is traditionally played by princes, and we have but few princes in this country, let us choose players who are prominent among us—democrats and republicans that we are.

The Governor of South Carolina (in the upper left court) has naturally chosen a Boston Lady (in h's right court) for his partner, and the Governor of North Carolina (in the opposite right court) is very glad to have the Lady from Philadelphia (in his left court) to assist him. The Governor of North Carolina, spinning his racquet in the air, now says to the Governor of South Carolina:

"What will you take?"

The Governor of South Carolina answers: "Rough," and as the racquet falls to the ground with the brass-headed tack in sight, he makes his choice of courts with due regard to the direction of the sun and wind. The Governor of North Carolina chooses the first service, and, taking the ball, stands on the base line of his right court with his left shoulder turned toward the net, and asks the Boston Lady:

"Are you ready?"

She answers, "Ready," and he at once releases the ball from his left-hand, and, swinging his racquet at arm's length, drives the ball into the opponent's right court, making a good service. Being skillful, he strikes with his racquet slanted,







A GAME OF LAWN TENNIS.

which gives the ball a twist, or violent whirling motion, so that when it strikes the ground it will not bound in a straight line, but will shoot toward the right.

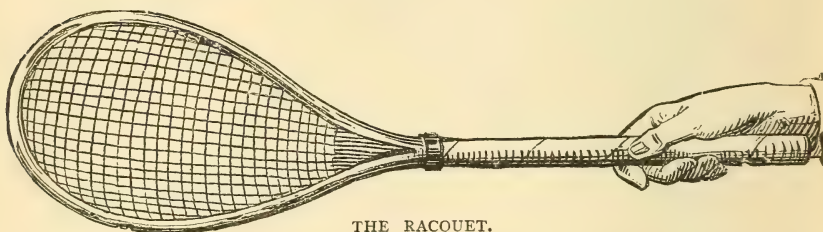
The Boston Lady is alert, and noticing the way the Governor held his racquet, has promptly placed herself so that, when the ball comes twisting from the ground, her left side is toward it, and it passes in front of her within her reach. She catches it lightly on her racquet, and drives it far over into her opponent's left court, hoping that the Governor of North Carolina may not be agile enough to get before it. But he is there, and you will observe that, though he had to run a considerable distance in a very short time, yet he has judged the ball so well and started so promptly that he is standing still, firmly on both feet, when the ball arrives, and he drives it sharply over the head of his old friend, the Governor of South Carolina. The latter, with his racquet above his head, stops the ball and volleys it blindly back within reach of the Lady from Philadelphia. And now is the opportunity for this distinguished lady. She has been not at all excited or made nervous by the swift battle which has been going on about her; she never is excited. She has moved up quite near the net, and now, with great coolness and precision, she receives the ball fairly on her racquet, and drives it at the Governor opposite with such force that he cannot prevent its touching his body, and the stroke is ended, scoring an ace for the server's side.

In learning to play tennis, the first and all-important lesson is the manner of holding the racquet. Vicious habits are seldom corrected. Do not begin in the wrong way. In serving, grasp the racquet lightly, with the hand elongated so that the thumb will lie along the handle, and the handle will be a continuation of the arm, and with the face of the racquet neither parallel with nor perpendicular to the ground. When in this position, and swung horizontally, it will not strike the ball squarely, but will rake it, giving it a violent twist, which will make it bound sharply and unexpectedly, and tend to deceive and evade your opponent. This is called the "pure cut." When you have learned to make a good service with

tolerable certainty, practice raking the ball on the right side and again on the left side (called respectively the "overhand twist" and the "underhand twist"), and notice and remember the effect on the ball when it bounds.

When the ball is being served or returned to you, promptly place yourself in a good position to receive it, and then wait for it coolly. Don't fidget.

Lastly, in playing this delightful game, remember that though sport is not a serious business, it is essentially an earnest one. It is not wise to dispute questions of fact with your opponent, or even discuss a construction of the rules farther than to state fairly your understanding of them. Take your defeats good-naturedly, and wear your honors lightly, but always do your level best.



THE RACQUET.

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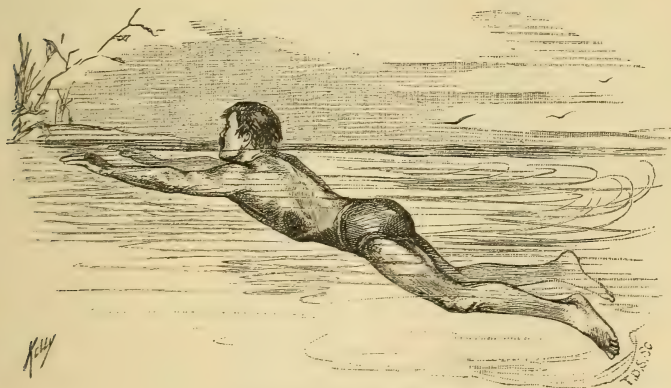
### *A TALK ABOUT SWIMMING.*

**H**ANGING in the shrouds of a sinking ship on a wild November afternoon, the engine-room flooded from the leak, the steam pumps not able to work, my back tortured beyond endurance with hard labor at the levers of the hand-pump, the deck swept by the bursting seas, a wild and angry sky above, the lee shore perfectly horrible in the tempest of its waves, and the thunder of the surf that went rolling and charging by squadrons of billows over a half-mile of low,



sandy bottom, I asked myself whether, if the ship broke up, I could manage the under-tow,—that merciless drag backward of the sea, the topmost wave washing the swimmer illusively toward the shore, the undermost sucking him down and out. I said to myself an emphatic "Yes!" But the experiment was spared me, and I got ashore next morning in a life-boat. Ever since that awful hour and night, I have had a sincere respect for the science and art of swimming, in which, next to God, then rested all my hope and trust.

But before we talk about fighting an under-tow in a wicked sea-way, let us discuss the principles and methods of swimming. To drown in a river, with the shore only a few yards away, when any dog or donkey would reach the land, must involve a feeling of personal humiliation as well as despair. To be self-trustworthy is the first thing in moments of danger; but the art of swimming has a high value in the saving of other lives, and is, besides, a luxury and accomplishment worth the having, for the mere fun of the thing. In our civilization, swimming is an acquired accomplishment. It is understood to



THE PROPER POSITION.

be a natural function with nearly all kinds of animals, hogs and humanity being the leading exceptions. The inability to swim is in all cases a defect of education. If we do not know already, let us learn how.

To an expert swimmer, sinking is impossible, except from cramp or exhaustion. The weight of a human body is just about that of the water it displaces; but the body weight is unevenly distributed, the lungs being the bladder and the head the sinker,—so that the first rule in swimming is to keep the head well back on the shoulders, where it will rest immediately above the lungs. But before this, the beginner should observe a few rules of safety.

Get accustomed to the shock of water. Wade slowly into a smooth, shallow place, turn and face toward the shore, duck under in water deep enough to cover the body, get your head wet, hold your breath when under, snort as you come to the air again, resisting the inclination to breathe in first; and then, in a depth of a foot or two, lie down, face downward, and touch the tips of your fingers on the bed of the stream. You will find that a very slight lift—hardly two ounces—will keep your head afloat, but not your heels. Use them as oars. Drop out backward into deeper water, walking on your fingertips, and you will find that the more of your body is under water, the less weight you have to carry. The only parts to keep in the air are your lips and nostrils. Make these the only exposed surface; hollow your loins, and carry your head well back, so as to have it perpendicular to the lungs.

All this is mere paddling; but you will soon find that keeping afloat is no trouble, unless you keep too high and try to swim as much in the air as in the water. You must remember that you have to displace as much weight of water as the weight of your own body. You cannot walk upon the waves, or climb out of them without a support. In swimming, you must lie low. The legs should be well under, and so should the hands. The attitude should be as in the first illustration—the chin in the water, the legs at an angle of thirty-three degrees. The theory is that you should use the feet as a counterpoise to the head—the chest, the buoyant part of the body, being the fulcrum of the lever. If your heels go up, your head will go down. Now stop paddling, abandon the grip of your hands on the bottom, keep your head toward the

shore, and strike out. The first illustration will show the attitude. Two feet depth of water is enough for the lesson.

Keep both hands well under water. You can't swim in the air. Hold your fingers together, the palms of the hands slightly hollowed, the head well back, the chest inflated, and strike with all four limbs in unison of movement. The hands and the feet will act as propellers, the hands moving backward and downward as low as the hips, and well outside of the body; the feet drawing together and pushing down at the same moment. Give full spread to your hands and feet. Their resistance to the water is your propelling force. Then gather, frog fashion, and repeat the motion. You rid yourself of the sense of danger by keeping in shallow water and striking toward shore.

Work in that way awhile, and the temptation will be irresistible to swim *from* shore; but it should be carefully indulged until you feel sure of yourself.

When you have thus learned to swim a half-dozen strokes, all the rest is mere practice in a delightful school, where there is more fun than work. Water frolics are high sport, and the best frolic of all is a good dive.

The fun of a good dive is fun indeed. I have often "fetched bottom" at fifteen feet, and brought up a big stone to prove to my comrades that I had been "clean down." But once, in water like crystal, in the Upper Lakes, where the pebbles could be seen at the bottom, I came rushing up with my head cracking, and saw an old fellow grinning at me. I



hung breathless to a wharf-pile, and he casually informed me that the water was twenty-six feet deep—"thar or tharabouts."

Jumping from a height is a doubtful job. Recollect that in everything connected with swimming you are top-heavy,



FLOATING.

and that water is incompressible. If you get off your balance while dropping, and fall on your side, either you will be drowned or your mother will need, next day, all the cold cream in the neighborhood. I have painful recollections on that subject. Two days in bed and a maternal lecture of the same length were too much to pay for that one dizzy, sidewise rush through the air. If I had taken my leaden head for a plummet, I should have been spared the blisters on my body. I ought to have dived.

"Floating" is the best illustration of the real buoyancy of the human body. It needs only self-possession and still water. There are two attitudes, one of which seems the more scientific, but which I never worked with any considerable success. It is accurately shown in the illustration given above, in which the position pictured is theoretically correct. I have seen such floating done with not the motion of a muscle, except as the lungs were kept inflated. Only the mouth and nostrils are out of water, and the arms, extended

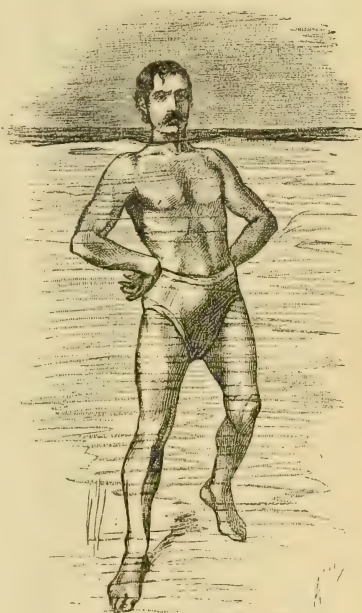


backward, balance the legs, the lungs being at the fulcrum. But as a personal habit I float better with my legs deeper in the water, and my hands wrapped under the small of my back, the body in a semi-perpendicular position. You have plenty of time to breathe if you are only self-confident.

In "treading water" there is a nice illustration of buoyancy. It is a great rest sometimes. The propulsive force of the tread of the soles of the feet against the water below them, with the buoyant power of the lungs supporting the head perpendicularly above them, carry the head clear out of water, and make a lazy but secure support. The hands should rest quietly on the hips, as shown in the picture. There are a dozen other feats in swimming, such as swimming on the back, which is lazier than any other method.

#### LIFE RESCUE.

The true plan to follow, when safety is the call, is to swim with everything below the chin well down under water, the head well back and resting centrally on the floating power of the lungs. But what will you do when your comrade is tired out and drowning? That depends. If he is cool and reliable, get in front of him, let him place his hands on your hips (not your shoulders), and you can carry him quite a distance. That supposes both parties, rescued and rescuer, understand fair play. The weaker party is the one that ought to drown, if he shows any disposition to drown his friend by a miserable, cowardly death-clutch at the only floating thing around him.



TREADING WATER.

In the case of the death-clutch, go to the bottom with your man and leave him there. There may be an unpleasant wrestle, but the real drowning man is ready to quit his prey when he strikes bottom. The better man has his right to come to the surface and swim ashore.

But in a considerable swimming experience, and some rescues, there comes one absolute rule: Never face a drowning man. He welcomes rescue so eagerly that he will hug you around the neck and take you down. The safest and best thing to do is to get behind him, and, unless



SAVING A COMRADE.

you are left-handed, put your left-hand under his right arm-pit. The lift you give him will be enough in ordinary water. He can be coaxed to help himself, and if he is a reasonable being you can bring him to shore. If he is insane with fright, recollect that you are to be both prudent and heroic. Get away from him, clutch his ankle with one hand, and tow him ashore. If the bank is near, he is not likely to drown on the way. If he does, it is not your fault. But a brave swimmer is master of his element. I saw two lads—I saw one of them, at least—carry a companion, who could not swim, across a deep, broad, and rapid river, just for a frolic. It was a reckless thing to do, and the three were used up when they staggered to the shore. They recrossed from a point up the river, where they found a good light pine slab, and towed John across on that.

But those same two young scamps once rescued a drowning comrade in a way that was remarkable for its neatness. The poor fellow was in mid-stream, cramped and exhausted, and barely able to keep afloat. Which was first was never decided, but in the critical moment each was behind him, each with a hand under an arm-pit; he was almost a dead-weight on their hands, and they swam him ashore, more dead than alive. It was a struggle, but they were the masters of the situation.

#### THE UNDER-TOW.

I began this gossip with a mention of the "under-tow." It is by no means a "phenomenon," but something to be read up and studied. Either on the sea-beach or at the great lakes, all the water that is tumbled ashore in heavy waves must go back again. The top-sea rolls in and the under-sea rolls out. Trust to the former. Keep clear afloat and as high as you can. Abandon the rule I have given you about deep swimming. Secure the friendship of the shoreward wave. Otherwise, if, when you are within ten feet of shore and safety, you drop your legs to the angle of thirty-three degrees, which is the deep-swimming position, you will



find that the "under-tow"—the under water that flows out to replace the waves that run in—will grab you by the ankles and pull you out and down again. Keep clear afloat, your head well down, your heels feeling the topmost of the impelling wave; keep your lungs well filled, and wash ashore. You are not safe until you can easily fasten your hands in the sand or gravel and pull yourself to land. But in shallow water, with a long surf rolling in behind you, the drag of the under-tow can only be avoided by swimming high and letting the waves "buck" you in. The rules for still water and rapid



THE UNDER-TOW.

river currents, in which deep swimming is safety, do not apply to mastering an under-tow. Swim shallow and trust the topmost wave.

Perhaps I ought to add a word about ice rescue, where a fellow skating on thin ice breaks through, and, heading toward shore with a pair of skates on his heels, cracks off successive chunks of ice until he is surrounded by them. It is the coldest kind of a baptism, and the hardest kind of a rescue. I was an actor in one when a college chum "slumped" through. The ice was unsafe, and we fished him out by knocking off fence-boards, sliding them out, lying face-downward on the boards, other fence-boards being slid out to us. He got hold of one,



climbed to the surface of the ice with the ready skill of a practiced swimmer, and said, with rattling teeth in the zero atmosphere: "Well, fellows, you did that nicely!" The remark was rather impathetic, but it was literally true.

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### PARLOR MAGIC.

*(Pleasing, Harmless, and Inexpensive Experiments, chiefly Chemical, for Young People.)*

THIS series of experiments is designed for the use of young people who are interested in the wonders and the beautiful realities of nature, and who delight to observe for themselves how curious are the phenomena revealed by scientific knowledge. Simple instructions are given for the performance of a number of pretty experiments, all of which are perfectly safe, and cost very little money. For "evenings at home," it is hoped that these experiments will be found indefinitely amusing and recreative, at the same time that they will lead the minds of boys and girls to inquiries into the entire fabric of the grand sciences which explain the principles on which they are founded. All the materials spoken of, and all the needful apparatus, which is of the simplest and most inexpensive kind, can be obtained at a good chemist's. It is of the highest importance that all the materials be pure and good.

#### PARLOR SUNSHINE.

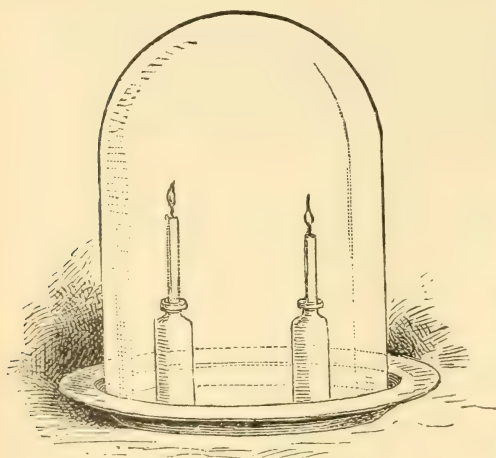
Obtain a yard of "magnesium tape" or "magnesium wire," sold very cheap by most druggists. Cut a length of six or eight inches; bend one extremity so as to get a good hold of it with a pair of forceps, or even a pair of ordinary scissors, or attach it to the end of a stick or wire. Then hold the piece of magnesium vertically in a strong flame, such as that of a candle, and in a few seconds it will ignite, burning

with the splendor of sunshine, and making night seem noon-day. As the burning proceeds, a quantity of white powder is formed. This is pure magnesia. While performing this splendid experiment, the room should be darkened.

#### CADAVEROUS FACES.

This is an amusing contrast to the lighting-up by means of magnesium. Again let the room be nearly darkened. Put about a tea-cupful of spirits of wine in a strong common dish or saucer, and place the dish in the middle of the table. Let every one approach to the distance of about a yard. Then ignite the spirit with a match. It will burn with a peculiar yellowish-blue flame, and in the light of this the human countenances, and all objects of similar color, lose their natural tint, and look spectral. The contrast of the wan and ghostly hue with the smiling lips and white teeth of those who look on, is most amusing. The effect of this experiment is heightened by dissolving some common table-salt in the spirit,

and still further by putting into it a small quantity of saffron. Let the spirit burn itself away.



THE BREATH OF LIFE.

#### THE BREATH OF LIFE.

Procure a tolerably large bell-glass, such as is used for covering clocks and ornaments upon the mantel-piece. It should not be less than eighteen inches

high, and eight or nine inches in diameter. Provide also a common dish, sufficiently large to allow the bell-glass to stand well within its raised border. Then pro-

cure two little wax-candles, three or four inches in length, and stand each in a little bottle or other temporary candlestick. Place them in the center of the dish and light the wicks. Then pour water into the dish to the depth of nearly an inch, and finish by placing the bell over the candles, which of course are then closely shut in. For a few minutes all goes on properly. The flames burn steadily, and seem to laugh at the idea of their being about to die. But presently they become faint,—first one, then the other; the luster and the size of the flames diminish rapidly, and then they go out. This is because the burning candles consumed all the oxygen that was contained within the volume of atmosphere that was in the bell, and were unable, on account of the water, to get new supplies from outside. It illustrates, in the most perfect manner, our own need of constant supplies of good fresh air. The experiment may be improved, or at all events varied, by using candles of different lengths.

#### ROSE-COLOR PRODUCED FROM GREEN.

Obtain a small quantity of roseine — one of the wonderful products obtained from gas-tar, and employed extensively in producing what are called by manufacturers the “magenta colors.” Roseine exists in the shape of minute crystals, resembling those of sugar. They are hard and dry, and of the most brilliant emerald green. Drop five or six of these little crystals into a large glass of limpid water. They will dissolve; but instead of giving a *green* solution, the product is an exquisite crimson-rose color, the color seeming to trickle from the surface of the water downward. When the solution has proceeded for a short time, stir the water with a glass rod, and the uncolored portion of it will become carmine.

#### SOME ELECTRICAL EXPERIMENTS.

Take a piece of common brown paper, about a foot in length, and half as wide. Hold it before the fire till it becomes quite hot. Then draw it briskly under your left arm several times, so as to rub it on both surfaces against the woolen cloth

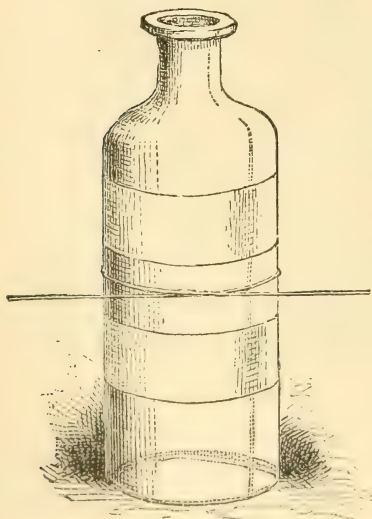
of your coat. It will now have become so powerfully electrified that, if placed against the papered wall of the parlor, it will hold on for some time, supported, as it were, by nothing.

While the piece of brown paper is thus so strangely clinging to the wall, place a small, light, and fleecy feather against it, and this, in turn, will cling to the paper.

Now, again, make your piece of brown paper hot by the fire, and draw it, as before, several times under the arm. Previously to this, attach a string to one corner, so that it may be held up in the air. Several feathers, of a fleecy kind, may now be placed against each side of the paper, and they will cling to it for several minutes.

Another curious electrical experiment is to take a pane of common glass, make it warm by the fire, then lay it upon two books, allowing only the edges to touch the books, and rub the upper surface with a piece of flannel, or a piece of black silk. Have some bran ready, strew it upon the table under the piece of glass, and the particles will dance.

#### TO CUT A PHIAL IN HALF.



CUTTING THE PHIAL.

Wind around it two bands of paper, corresponding in position to the two temperate zones of the earth, leaving a space between, corresponding to the equatorial zone. Then wind a long piece of string once around the equatorial space. Let an assistant hold one end of the string, and while holding one end yourself, move the phial rapidly to and fro, so that the string shall work upon the glass between the two pieces of paper. When the glass becomes hot in the equatorial space, pour

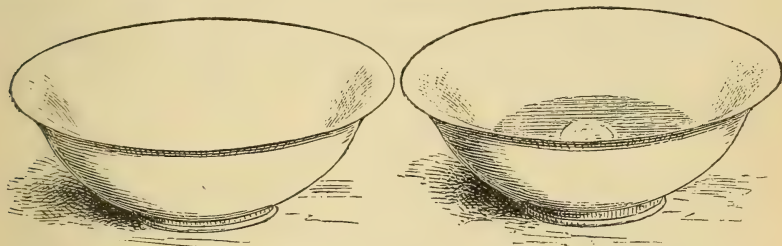


some cold water upon it, and the glass will break as evenly as if cut with a knife.

The principle involved in this curious experiment may be applied to the removal of a glass stopper, when too tight in the neck of the bottle for the fingers to stir it. All that is necessary is to wind a piece of thick string around the neck of the bottle, get an assistant to hold one end, and then work the bottle to and fro. The glass of the neck will become so warm as to expand, and the stopper will become loosened. It is often necessary to continue this friction for some minutes before the desired result is attained.

#### THE INVISIBLE RENDERED VISIBLE.

Place a coin in an empty basin, and let the basin be near the edge of the table. Ask one of the company to stand beside it, and to retire slowly backward until he or she can no



THE COIN INVISIBLE.

THE COIN VISIBLE.

longer see the coin. Then pour cold, clear water into the basin, and the person, who the moment before could not perceive the coin, now will see it quite plainly, though without moving a hair's breadth nearer.

#### LIGHT FROM SUGAR.

In a dark room, rub smartly one against the other a couple of lumps of white sugar, and light will be evolved. A similar effect is produced by rubbing two lumps of borate of soda one against the other.

## MINIATURE FIRE-SHIPS.

Procure a good-sized lump of camphor. Cut it up into pieces of the size of a hazel-nut, and having a large dish filled with cold water in readiness, lay the pieces on the surface, where they will float. Then ignite each one of them with a match, and they will burn furiously, swimming about all the time that the burning is in progress, until at last nothing remains but a thin shell, too wet to be consumed.

## PURPLE AIR.

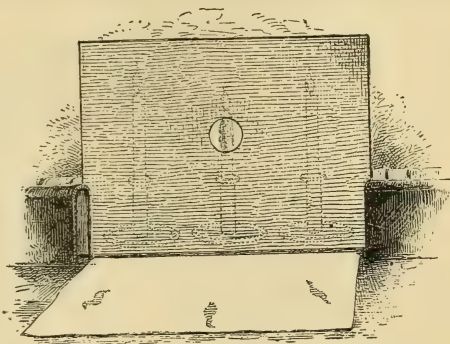
Obtain an olive-oil flask, the glass of which must be colorless. In default of an oil-flask, a large test-tube may be employed. Put into it a small quantity of solid iodine (procureable at the chemist's and very cheap), then lightly stop the mouth of the flask or test-tube with some cotton-wool, but not hermetically, and hold it slantwise over the flame of a spirit-lamp. The heat will soon dissolve the iodine, which will next turn into a most beautiful violet-colored vapor, completely filling the glass, and disappearing again as the glass gets cold.

## THE TWO EGGS.

Dissolve as much common table-salt in a pint of water as it will take up, so as to prepare a strong brine. With this brine half fill a tall glass. Then pour in pure water, very carefully. Pour it down the side, or put it in with the help of a spoon, so as to break the fall. The pure water will then float upon the top of the brine, yet no difference will be visible. Next, take another glass of exactly the same kind, and fill it with pure water. Now take a common egg, and put it into the vessel of pure water, when it will instantly sink to the bottom. Put another egg into the first glass, and it will not descend below the surface of the brine, seeming to be miraculously suspended in the middle. Of course the two glass vessels should be considerably wider than the egg is long.

## THE MAGIC APERTURE.

Put several lighted candles upon the table, in a straight row and near together. Lay upon the table, in front of them, a large piece of smooth, white paper. Have ready a piece of paste-board, large enough to conceal the candles, with a small hole cut in it above the middle. Place this so as to stand upon its edge between the row of candles and the sheet of paper in front, and there will be as many images of flames thrown through the hole and upon the paper as there are burning candles.



THE MAGIC APERTURE.

## GREEN FIRE.

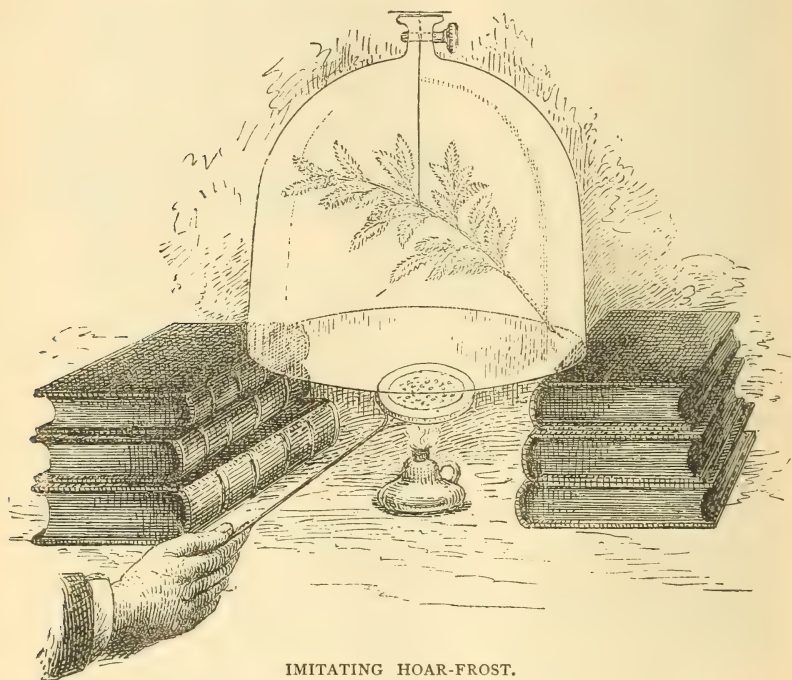
Obtain some boracic acid, mix it well with a small quantity of spirits of wine, or alcohol, place the alcohol in a saucer upon a dish, and then ignite it with a match. The flame will be a beautiful green. To see the color to perfection, of course, the room should be somewhat darkened.

A green flame may also be produced by using chloride of copper instead of boracic acid. And instead of mixing it with the alcohol, a small quantity may be imbedded in the wick of a candle.

## A BEAUTIFUL IMITATION OF HOAR-FROST.

Obtain a large bell-glass, with a short neck and cork at the top, such as may be seen in the chemists' shops. Then procure a small quantity of benzoic acid, which exists in the shape of snowy crystals. Elevate the bell-glass upon a little stage made of books or pieces of wood, so as to allow a spirit-lamp to be introduced underneath, and a little evaporating dish to

be held above the flame by means of a ring of wire with suitable handle. Place the benzoic acid in the evaporating dish, over the flame, and presently the acid will ascend in vapor and fill the bell, which must not be quite closed at the top. Before setting up the apparatus, introduce into the bell a small



branch of foliage, which may be hung by a thread from the neck of the bell. The stiffer and more delicate this branch, the better. In a short time it will become covered with a soft white deposit of the acid, very closely resembling hoar-frost. This makes an extremely pretty ornament for the parlor.

#### TO BOIL WATER WITHOUT FIRE.

Half fill a common oil-flask with water, and boil it for a few minutes over the flame of a spirit-lamp. While boiling, cork up the mouth of the flask as quickly as you can, and tie a



bit of wet bladder over the cork, so as to exclude the air perfectly. The flask being now removed from the lamp, the boiling ceases. Pour some cold water upon the upper portion of the flask, and the ebullition recommences! Apply hot water, and it stops! And thus you may go on as long as you please.

#### TO CONVERT A LIQUID INTO A SOLID.

Dissolve about half a pound of sulphate of soda in a pint of boiling water, and after it has stood a few minutes to settle, pour it off into a clean glass vessel. Pour a little sweet oil upon the surface, and put it to stand where it can get cold, and where no one will touch it. When cold, put in a stick, and the fluid, previously clear, will at once become opaque, and begin to crystallize, until at length there is a solid crystalline mass.

#### ICE ON FIRE.

Make a hole in a block of ice with a hot poker. Pour out the water, and fill up the cavity with camphorated spirits of wine. Then ignite the spirit with a match, and the lump of ice will seem to be in flames.

#### EXPERIMENTS REQUIRING CHEMICAL SOLUTIONS.

To prepare these solutions, purchase of a druggist a small quantity of the solid crystals of the substance needed for the experiment you wish to try. Dissolve the crystals in clear pure water, and keep the solution in a little bottle, labeled with the name. It is seldom that the solutions need be strong. When the crystal is a colored one, enough should be used to give the water a light tint—blue, yellow, or what it may be. None of these solutions will do any harm to the hands, unless there is a cut or a wound of any kind upon the skin. It is well, also, not to let a drop of any of them fall upon the clothes, or upon furniture, for some of them will stain. And none of them should ever be tasted, or touched by the lips or tongue, many of them being acrid and even poisonous.

With the acids still greater care is needed, the stronger acids being corrosive and poisonous. The greater portion of

these substances must likewise not be smelled, as the fumes or vapors would affect the nostrils painfully.

For the proper performance of these experiments with solutions, etc.,—at all events, for the neatest and most elegant performance of them,—there should be obtained from the chemist's shop about a dozen test-tubes. These are little glass vessels, manufactured on purpose, and very cheap. Do not take glasses that may afterward be used for drinking or household purposes. Be careful to have every one of your experiment glasses perfectly clean.

*To Produce a Beautiful Violet-Purple Color.*—Take a nearly colorless solution of any salt of copper. The sulphate is the cheapest and handiest. Fill the test-tube or other experimenting-glass about two-thirds full. Then drop in, slowly, a little liquid ammonia. It will cause a beautiful blue to appear, and presently a most lovely violet-purple, which, by stirring with a glass rod, extends all through the fluid.

If now you drop into this a very little nitric acid, the fluid will again become as clear as pure water.

*To Make a Splendid Scarlet.*—Again take some solution of sulphate of copper. Add to it a little solution of bichromate of potash. Then add a little solution of nitrate of silver, and there is produced a splendid scarlet color.

*To Make a Deep Blue.*—Now, take a nearly colorless solution of sulphate of iron, and drop into it, slowly, a small quantity of solution of yellow prussiate of potash. This will induce a beautiful deep blue, quite different from the blues that are produced from copper salts.

*To Make a Yellow Color.*—Take a solution of acetate of lead, and add a few drops of solution of iodide of potassium, and a most lovely canary-yellow color is produced.

*Invisible Inks.*—Nearly all those experiments which result in the production of color may be performed in another way, and be then applied to the purposes of secret writing. Thus :

Write with dilute solution of sulphate of copper. The writing will be quite invisible, but become blue when held over the vapor of liquid ammonia.

Write with the same solution, and wash the paper with solution of yellow prussiate of potash, and the writing, previously invisible, will become brown. If you choose, you may reverse this method, writing with solution of the prussiate of potash, and washing the paper with solution of the copper salt.

Write with solution of sulphate of iron, and the writing will again be invisible. Wash it over with tincture of galls, and it becomes black.

Write with sulphate of iron, and use a wash of yellow prussiate of potash, and the writing will come out blue. This experiment may likewise be reversed, and with similar result.

*How to Copper a Knife-Blade.*—Make a rather strong solution of sulphate of copper. Let a clean and polished piece of steel or iron, such as the blade of a knife, stand in it for a few minutes, and the iron will become covered or incrustated with a deposit of pure copper.

*To Make Beautiful Crystals.*—Dissolve, in different vessels, half an ounce each of the sulphates of iron, zinc, copper, soda, alumina, magnesia, and potash. The solutions can be made more rapidly by using warm water. When the salts are all completely dissolved, pour the whole seven solutions into a large dish, stir the mixture with a glass rod, then place it in a warm place, where it will not be disturbed. By degrees, the water will evaporate, and then the salts will re-crystallize, each kind preserving its own proper form and color. Some occur in groups, some as single crystals. If carefully protected from dust, these form extremely pretty ornaments for the parlor.

*Alum Baskets.*—These may be prepared by dissolving alum in water in such quantity that at last the water can take up no more, and the undissolved alum lies at the bottom of the vessel. The solution thus obtained is called a saturated one. Then procure a common ornamental wire basket, and suspend it in the solution, so as to be well covered in every part. There should be twice as much solution as will cover the basket. The wires of the basket should be wound with worsted, so that the surface may be rough. Leave it undisturbed in the solution, and gradually the crystals will form all over the surface.

Before putting in the basket, it is best to further strengthen the solution by boiling it down to one-half, after which it should be strained.

*The Lead-Tree.*—Dissolve half an ounce of acetate of lead in six ounces of water. The solution will be turbid, so clarify it with a few drops of acetic acid. Now put the solution into a clean phial, nearly filling the phial. Suspend in the solution, by means of a thread attached to the cork, a piece of clean zinc wire. By degrees the wire will become covered with beautiful metallic spangles, like the foliage of a tree.

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### HOW TO MAKE AND STOCK A SALT- WATER AQUARIUM.

ALMOST all of you—boys and girls—know what an aquarium is, and many of you have, no doubt, wished to own one; but the tanks made of French plate-glass and iron, for sale in the shops, are so expensive that few can afford to buy them; for those who cannot, I will tell how we—that is, my nephew Frank and myself—made ours for less than two dollars; and it answers every purpose.

Of course you must wait until spring before you can stock an aquarium, but it should be made in the winter; and it is also well to learn now what to do when spring comes.

First, we took a piece of planed pine board, two feet two inches long, and one foot two inches wide, for the bottom of the tank; this was just about an inch thick. Then four pieces



of hard wood or pine, one foot in length each, and about an inch square. These corner posts now had to be grooved so as to admit the glass at right angles. The posts were then fitted into a shallow place at the angles formed by a groove which we had made in the bottom board, and a screw driven into each through from the under side. The frame was now ready for the glass, the posts being set so as to leave about an inch of the bottom board projecting all around.

We then bought our glass, the side pieces measuring two feet long and a foot wide, the end pieces a foot square. We had the grooves in the corner sticks wide enough for the glass to slip in easily; it might have broken while we were trying to get it in, had we not taken that precaution. Then we nailed a slat of wood, an inch wide, all around the board on the outside of the glass. For the top, we made four grooved sticks to bind the glass, and secured them to the corner pieces; but as the corner pieces and glass sides were of the same height, we were careful to have the grooved part of the top pieces deeper than where they were secured at the corners.

Carpenters use a kind of cement that they call "rubber cement." For a few cents we bought enough to cover the bottom and the corners of our tank neatly. Then all around the bottom, on the wood outside the glass, we arranged shells in putty; then, having painted black the wood-work yet visible, our tank was done. We knew better than to use white lead in the putty, or paint of any kind on the inside.

By the time we had finished the tank, it was too late to think of stocking it; so we put it away till spring should come; then we were delighted to find that the cement had dried as hard as marble, though had we examined it months before we should have found it just as hard. This cement requires only a short time for drying.

We washed the tank out nicely, and made a place for it on a window-seat, where we could open the window back of it, to keep the water cool; for the cooler the water in an aquarium is kept, the better. In hot weather, it is sometimes necessary to place ice around the tank, or put a few pieces in the water.

## STOCKING AN AQUARIUM.

Stocking an aquarium is a great deal pleasanter than making the tank. Having procured a long-handled net, a tin pail, a long, stout fishing-line, with several large hooks firmly secured at one end, and something that will hold water enough to fill your tank, you set out for specimens. Ours is a salt-water aquarium; and as I am drawing only from our personal experience, I will say nothing of any other kind.

First, seek some place where you know the water is very deep, or deep enough for a large vessel to sail in; then take out your line, and throw it overboard; let the hooks go as far down as they will; never mind baiting them; what you want to catch will come up without it.

Your hooks have caught in something: a hard pull, and up comes a sponge. Sponges soon die in aquariums, and are injurious to the water; so, although your prize is handsome and curious, you will throw it overboard.

What have you caught this time? Nothing but a bunch of mussels, all matted together; yes, and half an old clam-shell attached to them; on the shell is something as large as a hen's egg, that looks like a piece of shrunken leather, only it is soft, like jelly. It does not look like a flower now, but it is one. Wait till you see it in your aquarium, after it has had a little time to recover from its alarm! It is an *animated* flower, called the sea-anemone. You will take great pleasure in feeding it, as it will eat meat as fast as you will, in comparison to its size. Put it, just as it is, into your pail, then throw out your line again; for you must have some more of them, of different colors.

Up come two on one shell! That is capital! Now you have a dark-red one, a yellow one, and a delicate pink-and-white one. Those will be all the anemones you will want.

There is something attached to the little stone that came up with the last anemone. It looks like a diminutive bush, with very delicate creamy-pink branches, and on the end of each is a dark pink jelly-like knob,—that is another live ani-

mal; and as it is a small one of its kind, you can put it, stone and all, into the pail. Never mind if you have knocked off two or three of its heads; they will grow again.

Now we will go to yonder creek, and see what we can get with our net. Scoop it along the bank, and let some mud come, too. Now, what is in it? Some shrimps, and some little fishes. You will want a dozen shrimps, at least; and of the fishes—small minnows and sticklebacks—choose three or four of each. Now, from the salt grass at your feet, pick a dozen or more snails; they are not very handsome, or interesting, but are indispensable in an aquarium, as they keep the grass clean and eat all the decaying vegetable matter.

Now a few plants, to supply oxygen to the water, will be all that is necessary. Choose two or three stones, as large as hens' eggs, with a generous crop of *green* sea-weed upon them. The brown and red sea-weeds usually do more harm than good; but that little stone of brown rock-weed you can take, as I see a pink bunch upon it, which I will tell you all about when you get it in your aquarium.

There is a small stone full of barnacles; take that, too; for the barnacles are very interesting—to the sticklebacks. Now you can start for home with your collection.

Your tank is all ready, in the north window of the sitting-room, where the sun never comes. Arrange your plants in it carefully, without detaching them from the stones they are on; then place the anemones in front, where they will have room to expand, and where they can be seen easily; then put in the fishes, shrimps, snails, etc., and fill up the tank with the clear, pure, salt water you brought.

Now look at the animated bush, attached to the stone! Every one of the jelly-like knobs, at the extremity of every branchlet, has expanded, and you have no less than twenty beautiful flowers, resembling the cyclamen, with pearly white petals, and centers deeper-colored than peach-blossoms; only the petals in this case are called *tentacles*, and are thrown out to catch whatever comes in their way in the shape of food.

The little pink bunch attached to the sea-weed has opened, also, and you see what resembles a dozen or more star-like flowers, on stems a quarter of an inch long: every one of them is a separate animal, as that foolish shrimp just proved to you; for, as he was swimming lazily by, he allowed his fan-like tail to come within their reach, and these zoöphytes immediately closed around it; but the shrimp was fortunate enough to get away.

Wait a minute, till I tell you what that big word means! Zoöphytes means "animal plants" (from two Greek words — *zoon*, an animal, and *phuton*, a plant), and is applied to sponges, corals, sea-anemones, and all those numerous beings that were at first supposed to hold a middle position between the animal and vegetable kingdoms, but whose natures have since been ascertained to be strictly animal.

Now look at your anemones! The yellow one has spread out like a great sunflower, on a stem as large around as a tea-cup, and three inches long. That stem is its body. The flat bottom of the stem has to answer for feet, and it will soon walk out of the shell it is on, if it becomes dissatisfied with its new dwelling-place. One of ours became discontented, and was two days walking over the glass. At last he attached himself to the cemented bottom of the tank, where he now appears to be perfectly contented. They move by suction, after the manner of snails.

Every one of their numerous tentacles has power to sting and paralyze whatever small prey comes within its reach, so they are able to catch and devour fish nearly as large as themselves. The little fishes in our aquarium seem to know all about them, and it is seldom one will approach them; but yesterday, as I was trying to remove with a small stick a piece of meat that I had dropped on an anemone, a minim, that had been watching me, offered to assist me, and approached the anemone near enough to touch one of its tentacles; then away it darted, shaking its head.

I had the curiosity to insert my finger in among the tentacles, and immediately experienced a sensation in it like a



slight galvanic shock, and from my finger to my wrist was quite numb for several hours afterward.

You did not know how barnacles worked before, did you? Each one of them is now throwing out a full dozen of delicately constructed feelers, that look like diminutive ostrich-plumes; on these they catch their food, which is too small to be seen by the naked eye. It is amusing to watch them as they work. One would imagine they had clocks inside their shells to time themselves by, so regular are their movements.

Here is a stickleback admiring them, too. It is poised motionless in the water above them, with the three sharp horns upon its back sticking up threateningly; now he darts down, and, taking all of one barnacle's feelers in his mouth, he bites them off, shaking his head savagely because they do not come easily.

What is the shrimp about to do that is climbing up the stone, running the risk of getting his delicate feet caught in the barnacle-shells as they close? He pauses before the barnacle the stickleback has just left, and thrusting his two-fingered hand into the partly opened shell, pulls off a piece of the poor body, and conveys it to his mouth, watching you all the while with his great goggle eyes, and looking for all the world like "Jacky Horner," who "put in his thumb and pulled out a plum." You may be sure he will not leave that shell till it is as clean inside as it is out.

A pair of our sticklebacks have just built a nest of seaweed in one corner of our aquarium, and are guarding it all the time. Woe to the minnow who should be so unfortunate as to approach it! We are watching every day for the little fish to make their appearance. Papa Stickleback attends to the nest now, but soon the old mother-fish will have all she can do to keep her children at home and out of danger; for, as there are two doors to her nest, they will dart out of one door nearly as fast as she can put them in at the other. Her way of carrying them cannot be agreeable to the little ones, for she takes them in her mouth, and often swallows them; but when she re-deposits them in the nest, they are well, and lively.

You will want to feed your anemones every day, with small pieces of dried meat. You will be astonished to see how many different shapes they will take; for, besides looking like different flowers, they will at times contract their bodies and resemble vases full of flowers; then they will droop their tentacles, and resemble the weeping-willow tree; then they will turn all their tentacles inside their bodies, and look like long thimbles; and when you touch them with a stick, down they will drop as flat as fried eggs.

Your greatest trouble will be to keep the water pure, unless you should be so fortunate as to just balance the vegetable and animal life; in that case, everything will thrive.

It is better to have a few good healthy animals than many; and if one dies, it should be removed at once.

The green dulse, or sea-cabbage, is the best for the vegetable element of the aquarium; and it should be washed before being placed within. A good way to send air into the tank is to dip up the water carefully, and let it fall in such a manner as to make bubbles.

Those who live near the salt water can easily renew the water in their aquariums, if it becomes impure; but those who live at a distance from the coast can restore the water to its original purity by filtering it through a sponge. The trouble will be nothing in comparison to the joy you will experience on beholding the gratitude expressed by the animated beings in your aquarium.

As there has been so much done lately in the business of making aquariums, it is quite possible to purchase cheap iron ones; and better still, we often see second-hand ones of all sizes for sale very cheap. In the city, the bird-dealers and "Old Curiosity" men have them, and in nearly all large towns there are naturalists and taxidermists who either have them or will kindly give all information about them. So if our home-made aquarium is not just what our readers care to have, they can with very little cost secure a better. We have seen aquaria made very strongly and durably of stone and iron. A flat piece of slate, or freestone, or marble, is easily

grooved, and then a blacksmith can easily make iron standards or corner posts with grooves; these can be fitted into holes at the corners, and secured firmly by screws from beneath. We think that it is better to have the tank of stone or iron, if practicable, as the wood almost always swells to such an extent that it soon becomes troublesome.

A very pleasant aquarium, and a very handsome one, is soon made by taking one of the large cake-bells of the confectioner, and setting it on a wooden stand to support it. You can easily do it by boring a hole in a stout piece of pine to admit the handle. You have then a beautiful tank, and one that will not leak. This is also very easily cleaned, which is an important point.

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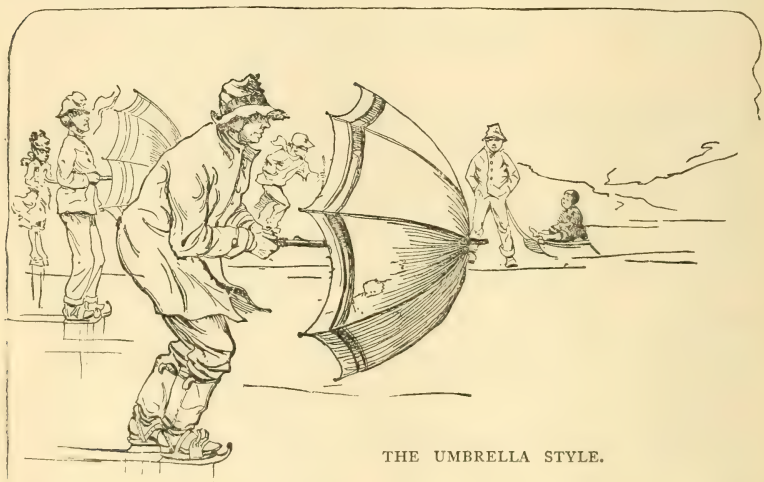
### *SKATE-SAILING.*

VERY few skaters have not, now and then, to a moderate extent, made ice-boats of themselves by standing up straight, with their backs to the wind, and allowing themselves to be blown along before it. Coats, held wide open, umbrellas, shawls, and the like, have been used to gain greater speed; but, after all was done, there remained the long pull back against the wind—no laughing matter, with the thermometer in the twenties, or lower, and a howling north-wester sending the loose snow in stinging sheets along the ice. There was so much fun, however, in running down before the gale, that boys have always made light of working to windward. Why in the world it did not sooner occur to some ingenious lad that he could turn himself into an efficient ice-boat, is one of those things that cannot be explained; but certain it is that, until last winter, the world at large did not know that Canadians were in the habit of rigging themselves with spars and canvas, sailing “close-hauled,” “running free,” having themselves “taken aback,” “missing stays,” being struck by squalls, and,

in short, going through no end of fascinating maneuvers, with the aid of the wind and without danger of a ducking in case of an upset.

The name of the inventor of skate-sailing has not been announced, but his plan was the simple one of stretching an oblong sail on a light frame, and holding it by means of a spar reaching from end to end. With this, it is possible to do everything that an ice-boat can be expected to do. But the crew works at a disadvantage: the steersman can see only one-half as much as he ought to see, and of course stands in constant danger of collision. To lift or lower the sail, so as to see if the way is clear, is a somewhat awkward operation.

Another difficulty with this form of sail is, that its spars must be somewhat heavy, in order to bear the strain of sufficient bracing, as there is a tendency on the part of the sail to twist and make a complete wreck of itself and crew. The



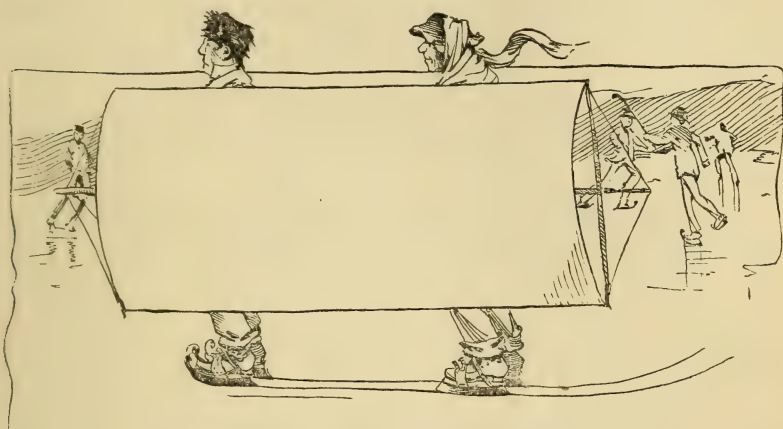
THE UMBRELLA STYLE.

latest improvement does away effectually with both these imperfections, and seems to provide a nearly perfect device for skate-sailing.

In the first place, the sail is divided into foresail and main-sail, so that the crew has his whole course in plain sight between the two. Secondly, the main spar is made double, so



that it affords two points of support for each of the "yards" or cross-pieces, and renders the whole affair so strong that comparatively light spars may be used. In the diagram given on



THE OLD STYLE OF SKATE-SAILING.

the next page, A G is the main spar, from eight to twelve feet long, according to the size and strength of the crew. It is made of bamboo, or some light native wood like spruce or pine. The pieces should not be less than an inch and a half in diameter in the middle. They may be tapered toward the ends, but one side of each should be left flat. Each piece, in short, is shaped like an archer's bow, much lengthened. The flat sides are laid together, and the ends at A and G are lashed firmly with strong twine. In or near each end, at A and G, is set a button to hold the clew—corner, that is—of the sail.

The best spar yet devised is made of four pieces of bamboo, with brass fishing-rod ferrules at the butts, fitting into one another at M. Brass tips hold the smaller ends of the bamboos together at A and G. The butts join at the middle of the spar, which can thus be taken to pieces and easily carried.

The sails are made from the heaviest cotton sheeting—unbleached is best. Tack the material smoothly on the floor, and mark out the sails, making ample allowance for heavy

hems. Stitch stout tape all around where the edges are to be, and have the hem as strong as possible, especially at the corners, sewing through the tape and several thicknesses of the sheeting. If the sails are to keep their shape, the tape is indispensable. Stout laid cord (cotton or hemp), sewn around the edges and forming small loops at the clews, makes a desirable finish, but is not absolutely necessary. Instead, small brass or galvanized rings may be sewn to the clews. These rings must be large enough to catch easily on the pins or knobs in the spar-ends.

The sails may range in size from three to five feet square, according to the size, strength, and weight of the skater. It is

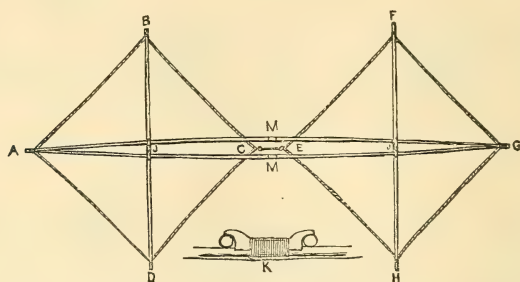


DIAGRAM OF NEW SKATE-SAIL.

not difficult to arrange them for reefing, but they are so easily adjustable to the wind without reefing, that this is hardly necessary.

The cross-yards are quite light. Bamboo, five-eighths of an inch thick at the smaller end, is probably heavy enough for the largest practicable sail. They must be made three or four inches longer than the diagonal of the sail. Near the ends of the yards are buttons similar to those on the spar. To the middle of each yard is firmly lashed a cleat, some three to five inches long (K in the above diagram), whose ends are shaped so as to receive and hold the two pieces of the main spar, when they are sprung apart.

Two opposite clews of the sail are now hooked over the buttons at the ends of the yard, the main spar is sprung apart

until the cleat can be inserted and held at right angles between its pieces, as at J. The yard is pushed along until the clew of the sail can be hooked over the button at the spar-end. The other sail is then put in position similarly at the other end of the spar, and the two remaining clews, at C and E, are strained together with a strap or cord as tightly as the material will permit. The whole affair is exceedingly light, strong, and elastic, and will stand any reasonable amount of strain.

Such is the rig. Now, the question is, how to manage it. This is a far less complicated matter than in the case of a sail-boat, although the principle is the same. If you are caught by a squall, all you have to do is to let go of everything, and your sails will fall flat on the ice and await your pleasure.

In running before the wind, all you have to do is to hold the spar across the course of the wind, steer with your feet, and go as fast as the wind does. You can vary your course at will considerably to the right or left without altering the position of the sail.

When your course is nearly at right angles to that of the wind, or against it, you will naturally take the spar under one or the other arm, and point the foresail more or less in the direction from which the wind comes.

Call the diagram on the next page a pond, with the wind blowing from top to bottom. In this diagram, the black spots represent the skater, the arrows the direction in which he sails under different conditions, and the long line, etc., the spar and sails. In his first course down the middle of the pond, he grasps the spar by the middle, or holds it under his arms behind him. Squaring away with his back to the wind, as at A, he sails before it to the lower end of the pond, moving his feet only for the purpose of steering. In order to make the wind take him back to his starting-point, he turns his sails at an acute angle to the course of the wind, as at B, C, D, and E, instead of across it, as at A. If pointed nearly as at B or C, it will carry him directly across the pond. If as at D and E, it will carry him more or less up the pond, as indicated by the arrows. When he reaches the shore on one tack,—

say that represented by E,—he “goes about,” that is, changes the direction of his sails so that they point as at D. The wind will now carry him on a slant to the opposite shore,

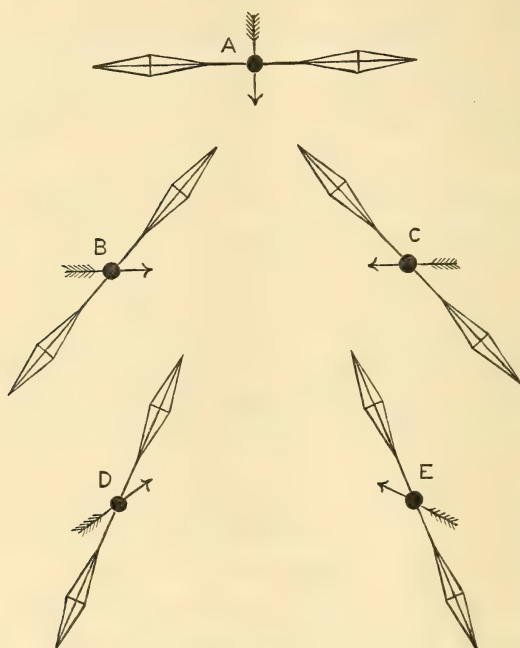


DIAGRAM FOR TACKING.

which he will reach at a point still nearer the head of the pond. Thus, by zigzagging from one side to the other, now on one tack, and now on the other, he may work his way to windward.

Experiment alone can show each individual how best to trim his sails, whether to carry his spar under his windward or leeward arm, or before or behind him. Tastes differ in all these particulars. So in going about,—changing, that is, from one tack to the other,—each must adopt the method which he personally finds most convenient. One, perhaps, will pass the spar over his head; another will let the foresail fall



off to leeward, and bring up the mainsail on the other side, so that it will in turn become the foresail. In all these particulars, each must be a law unto himself; but in regard to avoiding collisions, it is plainly necessary to have a general understanding, and the rules of the Hudson River Ice-Boat Club, adapted to skate-sailing, are perhaps the best.

#### RULES FOR SKATE-SAILING.

I. Skate-sailers on the port tack must give way to those on the starboard tack.

II. When skate-sailers are moving side by side, or nearly so, on the same tack, those to windward must give way to those to leeward when requested to do so, if there is an obstacle in the course of the leewardmost. But the leeward skate-sailer must go about or change his course at the same time as the windward skate-sailer, or as soon as he can without coming into collision. The new direction must be kept, at least until the obstacle has been cleared.

III. When skate-sailers are moving side by side, as in Rule II., and approaching a windward obstacle, the leewardmost must give way when requested to do so. But the windwardmost must change his course at the same time as the leewardmost, or as soon as he can do so without coming into collision, and the new direction must be kept, at least until the obstacle has been cleared.

IV. When skate-sailers are running free, it rests with the rearmost ones to avoid collision.

V. Skate-sailers running free must always give way to those on either tack.

VI. Skate-sailers who violate any of the foregoing rules in the course of a race shall forfeit all claim to the victory.

VII. A touch, whether of person or of rig, constitutes a collision, either with another skate-sailer, or with a mark or buoy, and he who is responsible for it, under the rules, forfeits all claim to the victory.

VIII. No means of locomotion, other than that afforded by the wind, is permissible during a race.

For the benefit of those who are not familiar with sea-terms, it should be stated that "running free" means sailing before, or nearly before, the wind. "Close-hauled," or "on the wind," means sailing sharply across its course. When the skater's right side is presented to the wind, he is on the star-board tack; when his left side is presented to the wind, he is on the port tack.

The possibility of using the sail on an ordinary coasting-sled will naturally occur to every skater. This can be accom-



A FLEET UNDER SAIL.

plished with the aid of a few additional fixtures. A regular ice-boat has three runners—two in front and one in the rear. The latter is pivoted, so that it can be turned from side to side like the rudder of a boat, and used in like manner for steering. The first thing to be done with a sled is to provide it with sharp shoes, which will not slip over the ice sidewise. A pair of skates, or skate-blades, fastened one to each runner near the

bend, are as good as anything. The fitting of the after-runner is a more complicated affair, if fastened to the sled, and it is not worth while to give directions for it here. The simplest way is to let the after part of the sled rest on its own proper runners, and depend on the feet for steering, or use a stout stick shod with iron. A blade-shaped iron is best, as it presents an edge to the ice.

It is possible to kneel on the sled and hold the sail under the arm, but a mast about three feet high, stepped at the side of the sled, is better. If but one mast is carried, it must be arranged so that it can be readily shifted from one side to the other. The head of the mast is crotched to receive the upper spar; or a hook, large enough to hold it, is inserted an inch or two below the mast-head. The lower spar rests against the mast, and is held there by the crew with one of his hands. A crew of two, on a long sled of the so-called "pig-sticker" variety, can do very pretty work, one tending the sail and the other steering; but a crew of one will think that he needs at least two extra pair of hands, until he gets the knack of the thing.

It is suggested that more sail can be carried by a single skater if his yard-arms are shod with light metal disks, so that they can be allowed to rest on the ice and act as runners. So far as known, this has not been actually tried. It looks promising, but will necessitate rather heavier yards.

This new winter sport opens for all skaters a fresh field of enjoyment. Races or, if you please, "regattas" can be indulged in to any extent, and individual skill in the management of one's self under canvas will afford exhilarating exercise for brain and body, without in the least increasing the danger. Girls as well as boys, ladies as well as gentlemen, can take part in this pastime, and, indeed, one of the best ways of managing a sail is to have a double crew, one holding the spar "for'ard" and the other "aft."

Of course, if the girls have anything to do with sails, they will very soon begin to decorate them, and use colored material. A set of sails made of silk would be amazingly pretty in

combination with a tasteful skating-costume, skimming across the gleaming surface of a frozen lake, and the effect would be heightened by little colored streamers flying from the yard-arm.

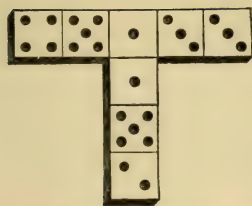
Skate-sailing is a delightful exercise and recreation for the members of a single household, and it would not be surprising if skate-sailing clubs should become popular in many parts of the country.



A GENTLE CRAFT.



## NEW DOMINO GAMES.



THE game of dominos has never had very great popularity in America, and, indeed, has not received the attention that it deserves. Less laborious than chess, and less exciting than cards, it partakes of the skill and chance of both.

The two games described below are both founded upon the principles of different games at cards, and vary considerably from the old "Muggins," "Bergen Game," etc.

## " BID."

This game may be played by not less than two, or more than five, persons. The dominos are reckoned in suits, from the doublet downward. Thus, in the suit of sixes, the double-six is the highest, the six-five next, the six-four, six-three, etc., to the six-blank. In fives, the double-five, five-six, five-four, etc. In blanks, the double blank, blank-six, blank-five, etc. Observe that all the pieces excepting the doublets count in two suits.

The game is thirty-two,—one being counted for each trick taken when a bid is successful,—and five tricks make a hand.

The dominos having been properly shuffled, five are dealt to each player. The one at the dealer's left then "bids" for tricks. That is, out of the five tricks which make the hand he offers to take a certain number. If he bids for less than five, the player on his left has the privilege of overbidding him. Whoever bids for the highest number of tricks chooses the trumps, and leads. All dominos excepting trumps call suit to the end having most spots, all trumps being played and called in the suit of trumps instead of their own. A player is obliged to follow suit when he has it. Doublets, being the highest in their respective suits, if led, can only be taken by trumps. If played, however, they do not take a trick, unless in suit to the larger end of the piece led. Trumps and dominos led are taken by a piece higher in their respective suits.

The person making trumps must take all the tricks for

which he bids, and can count no more; if he fails to take them, his score is to be set back as much as he has bid; except when the game is between two persons only, in which case the number bidden for by the loser should be added to the score of his opponent. Thus, if a player bids for four tricks, he can count but four although he take all the hand. If he fail to take four, his score is diminished by that number; or, if two play, his adversary's is increased by four.

The policy of the game is only to be learned by experience, but a few suggestions to beginners may not be amiss. In deciding how many tricks to bid for, it is usually safe to count all the dominos in the same suit (that suit to be made trumps), and the doublets held. Care must, however, be taken not to depend too much on trumps which are low in their suits; though the smaller the number of players, the greater the risks one may run. It is an advantage to have the lead, so that it is usually best in bidding for any less than five, while playing trumps or doublets first, to retain a trump with which to recover the lead, if lost.

As illustration, suppose two persons, A and B, to be playing. A deals, and in his own hand finds the six-four, five-one, six-blank, five-blank, and double-blank. B has the six-five, four-two, three-one, three-blank, and double-two. It is B's first "bid," and he says he will bid for three tricks. A replies:

"I will bid for four, and I make blanks trumps."

He then plays the double-blank. B follows with the three-blank, as he must match a trump with a trump, if possible. A leads the six-blank, and B, having no trump, puts down his lowest piece, the three-one. A plays the six-four, to which B must give his six-five as "suit" to the larger end. This wins the trick for B, who leads double-two, his best domino. Fortunately for A, he has no two, and so is at liberty to take the doublet with his trump, five-blank. He then lays down his five-one, which B cannot take, as he has no suit. Thus A wins his four tricks and scores four points. If B had not been overbid he would have named twos as trumps, playing double-two, six-five, and four-two in succession.

## "WESTPHALIAN GAME."

Played by two or three players. The suits count as before, except that the double-blank is always the highest trump. The doublet next below the doublet of trumps is third in the game, but is called and played in its own suit. After this, dominos of the suit of trumps come in order. Thus, if fives are trumps, the double-blank is highest, then double-five, double-four, five-six, five-four, etc. If ones are trumps, double-blank, double-one, double-six, one-six, one-five, etc.

The counts are as follows, the game being thirty-two. The first trick played counts one ; the last two tricks count one each ; one is scored for any three tricks taken without the introduction of a trump. [There is one exception to this,—if the doublet below trumps, which is the third in the game, takes a trick *by its power as third in the game*, the trick is not to be counted as one of the three by suit.] At the end of a hand, the excess of doublets held by any player is added to his score.

Five dominos are dealt as in "Bid," the dealer ending by turning up a domino, the larger end of which indicates the suit of trumps. If the double-blank is turned, sixes are trumps. The player on the left of the dealer has the liberty of rejecting any one of his own dominos, and taking the turned trump in its stead. If he passes, the next player has the same right. If it comes to the dealer and he passes also, he must turn it down, and turn a fresh trump, which, however, must not be in the suit rejected. The choice of discarding for the new trump belongs as before to the player at the dealer's left ; and the person taking up the trump has the lead. As fast as a player plays a piece, he draws one from the pool, keeping five constantly in hand until all the dominos are distributed.

As in "Bid," suit must be followed. The main points are to secure as many doublets as possible, securing the first and last two points, and while, if possible, getting "three by suit" yourself, to prevent this in your opponent. Use small trumps if you can in taking doublets and third tricks.

*A KNOTTY SUBJECT.*

IF Alexander the Great had been a sailor, instead of a soldier, he would have quietly untied that Gordian knot, and the world would never have heard about it. Cutting it with his sword, like an angry boy, made the act famous. Alexander was, however, by no means the first to lose his temper over a knot, though he is, perhaps, the first of whom history makes special mention. It is safe to say that the Garden of Eden saw the first knots tied and untied, and the process is bound to go on to the very end of time.

The art of making knots is of immense importance on shipboard. Every day the safety of life and property depends upon the security with which they are tied. On shore these knots may be of less general consequence, but a knot that will hold is certainly far better anywhere than one that will slip, and occasions often arise when an expert knot-maker is an exceedingly useful person. So, boys, find a piece of heavy twine or small rope like an ordinary clothes-line, and learn a few of the regular knots, bends, and hitches.

A "knot," as a sailor understands the term, is more permanent than a "hitch," and a "bend" is a sort of half-way name, which may be either one or the other. A good knot, when once tightened, never slips, but at the same time it does not "jam" so that it cannot be readily untied. A "hitch" is made and cast off more quickly and easily than a knot, and is not usually trusted for permanent duty. For convenience of description, in many of the following examples, the line is supposed to have one end made fast to some fixed object. Take hold of it, and the part between your hand and the point where it is fastened becomes the "standing-part," while the rest is the "end-part," or "running-part." Wherever the term "bight" is used, it means the same as loop. In the illustrations, the knots are generally represented before they are tightened, so that their formation can be more clearly shown.



## A SQUARE OR REEF KNOT. (FIGURE 1.)

This is generally made with two ends of a line (or the ends of two lines, as the case may be) around some object, as a spar, or a furled sail. Let A and B (Figure 1) represent the two ends. Pass one over and then under the other, as in the lower part of Figure 1. This makes a simple "overhand knot." Repeat it with the ends as indicated by the dotted lines, haul taut, and you have the square or reef knot complete, as shown in the upper part of the diagram. Notice that the loop made by B passes *over* both parts of A, and that made by A passes *under* both parts of B. If either of the loops divides the parts passing through it, you have made what sailors call a "granny," which will slip. Ends of different-sized lines cannot be tied securely together by this knot.

## A BOWLINE KNOT. (FIGURE 2.)

Make fast one end of your line. Take a turn, or "goose-neck," C, in standing-part, and hold this in position with your left-hand while you pass the end-part, B, up through C, behind and around A, and finally down through C. Then

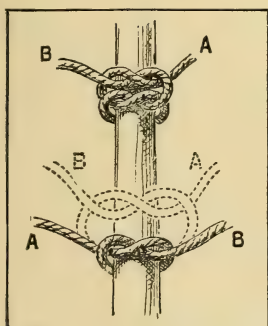


FIG. 1. SQUARE KNOT.

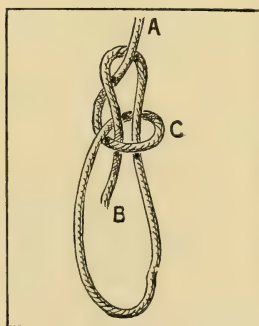


FIG. 2. BOWLINE KNOT.

haul taut. This is not precisely the way in which a sailor does it, but is simplest to describe. If you would tie the knot in true nautical style, lay the end-part across the standing-

part, and with a turn of the left wrist place the goose-neck, C, over it. Finish as before.

A Bowline upon a Bight (Figure 3) is made with a double line. Let A and A' represent the doubled standing-part and B the bight of the doubled line (in this case the end-part). Make a bight, C, as in simple bowline, and pass B up through it (see dotted lines, Figure 3). So far, the knot is practically the same; but now B must be pulled through C, and spread open sufficiently to bend it downward and over the larger bights, C and D, and then up again until it surrounds the doubled standing-part, A A'. Pull it downward until it binds A A' tightly, and the knot is complete. A safe way of lowering a

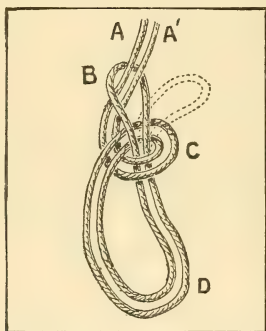


FIG. 3. BOWLINE UPON BIGHT.

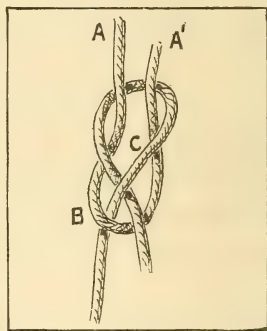


FIG. 4. BECKET-HITCH.

person from a window in case of fire would be to shorten one of the bights at D, let the person sit in the longer bight, and put the shorter one behind the back and under the arms. The bowline in its different forms is perhaps the most useful of knots, being perfectly secure and very easily tied. Two simple bowlines, made through one another, bend lines together with absolute security, and this cannot always be done with a single knot where the lines are of different sizes.

#### BECKET-HITCH OR BEND. (FIGURE 4.)

This is the most trustworthy single knot for fastening two ends together. Make a bight, B (Figure 4), in one line. Pass the

end of the other from behind through it and once around both parts, A A', of the bight. Then down under its own part as at C, and haul taut, taking care not to let the turn taken around A A' slip down over B. A single turn around A A' makes a Becket-hitch; a double turn makes a Double-hitch. Either is secure.

A ROLLING-HITCH, HALF-HITCHES,  
ETC. (FIGURE 5.)

Half-hitches are made with a line around its own standing-part. In Figure 5, C C' are half-hitches. Pass the end-part B around standing-part A, then between its own part E and the spar. The same motions will make half-hitch marked C', and so you may keep on indefinitely if you wish. Two half-hitches are also known as a "Clove-hitch." The Rolling-hitch shown in Figure 5 is made by first taking two round turns, D D, about a spar. Half-hitches are extremely useful in an infinite variety of ways, one of which is in making a "Sheep-

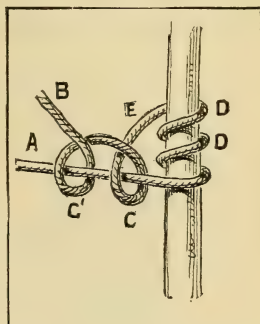


FIG. 5. ROLLING-HITCH.

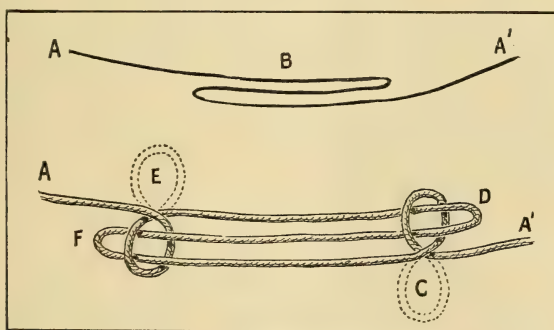


FIG. 6. "SHEEP-SHANK."

shank" (Figure 6). But you must first learn to lay a half-hitch over anything—as, for instance, a stick—without taking the end through. Look at Figure 6, and you

will see that C and E are nothing more than half-hitches over D and F. Experiment on the end of a stick, and you will soon find that, by making a small bight or goose-neck, as in the bowline knot, you can lay it over, forming a half-hitch, or as many half-hitches as you like, around the stick. Now suppose you wish to shorten a rope which is made fast at each end—a swing, for instance—without climbing up to undo it. There will be two standing-parts, A A'. First double the line on itself as at B, holding the parts together with the left-hand. Secondly, make a goose-neck, C, and lay it over D, as above directed, making a half-hitch around the two parts D. Thirdly, make a similar goose-neck, E, and lay it in like manner over F. Pull tight in the direction of A and A', and you will find that your rope is securely shortened.

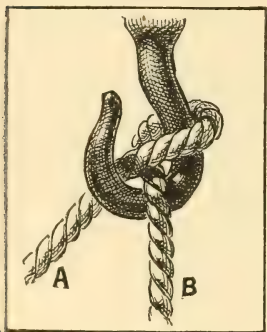


FIG. 7. BLACKWALL HITCH.

#### A BLACKWALL HITCH. (FIGURE 7.)

Form a bight by placing the running-part (B) across and under the standing-part (A). Put this over a hook (as the hook of a tackle-block) from below, so that the inside of the bight rests against the back of the hook, and the parts cross in the bend of the hook, the standing-part being on top. A rope fastened to the handle of a bucket by means of this hitch is readily attached and detached to and from the hook of a tackle-block.

#### A CAT'S-PAW. (FIGURE 8.)

This is used wherever a "Blackwall" would be used. Take the lines with both hands a short distance apart. Let the ends A and B, and the bight, hang downward loosely, the hands being at C and D. Turn the bights C and D round and round twice, either outward or inward. The motion will twist A and B around the two parts of the bight E, as shown in the cut, leaving the fingers holding the two small bights C and D.



Slip these over the hook, and you have a "Cat's-paw." Either A or B, or both of them together, will bear a strain when hauled taut.

Figure 9 shows how a weight, or any number of weights, or sinkers, may be fastened to a line. The cut hardly calls for

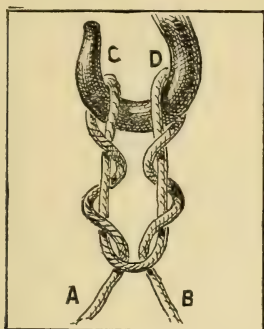


FIG. 8. CAT'S-PAW.

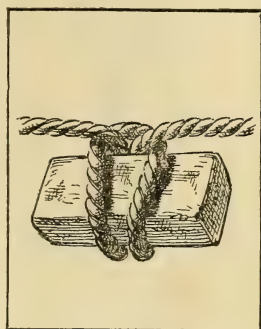


FIG. 9.

explanation. A very little ingenuity will show how this hitch is made without putting the end of the line through the bight.

#### A TIMBER-HITCH. (FIGURE 10.)

Pass the running-part (B) under the timber. Carry it up to and around standing-part (A), and then pass it twice or more around itself, as at C, D, etc. When the standing-part is tightened, the line binds around the timber, so that it will

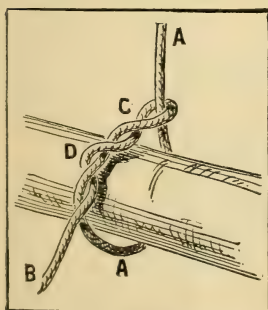


FIG. 10. TIMBER-HITCH.

not slip. The timber-hitch is used in hauling spars or timber, and is handy for any similar purpose.

#### A SINGLE WALL-KNOT. (FIGURE 11.) INFALLIBLE LOOP. (FIGURE 12.)

In order to fasten off the end of a rope, and prevent its untwisting, many plans have been resorted to. The most simple, and at the same time the most effectual, is called a

Single Wall-Knot (Figure 11). The three strands are numbered 1, 2, 3. Take No. 1, and make half-loop A. Take No. 2, and pass through, under A, retaining the shape somewhat as

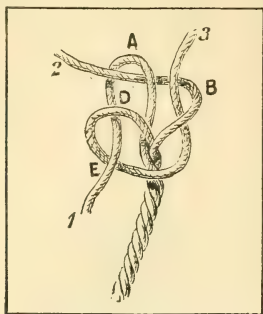


FIG. 11. SINGLE WALL-KNOT.

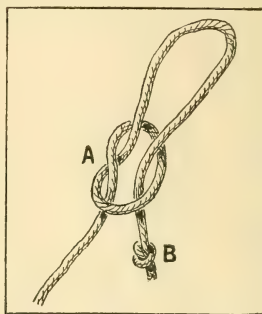


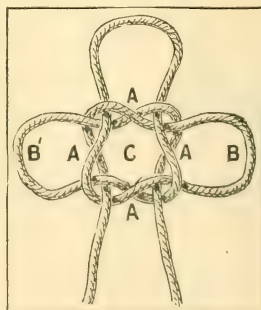
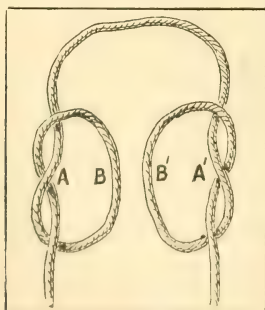
FIG. 12. INFALLIBLE LOOP.

illustrated by B; then take No. 3, and pass over No. 1 at D, under at E, around and up through B. When the ends are pulled tight and cut off evenly, or served (wound, that is) with fine thread or twine, it makes a very neat finish.

The "Infallible Loop" (Figure 12) is a thoroughly trustworthy one, and well adapted for the use of archers. The cut sufficiently illustrates the manner of making it. When the over-hand knot at A is tightened, the end-knot, B, cannot slip through, and so a secure loop is formed for the "nock" of the bow.

#### THE TRUE LOVERS' KNOT. (FIGURES 13 AND 14.)

We may as well conclude this knotty essay with a more difficult performance than any thus far attempted, to wit,



FIGS. 13 AND 14. TRUE LOVERS' KNOT.

"The True Lovers' Knot." Two cuts are necessary for the explanation of this. First, tie two loose overhand knots, as at A A' in Fig. 13. Then pass the bight B between the two parts of the line near A', and the bight B' between the two parts near A. Pull them through carefully, and the knot will assume the shape shown in Figure 14. This knot can be evenly tied only by taking pains to adjust the bights so that they will be of equal size. It has no general use, but it is employed in the navy to carry heavy shot, the loose ends being spliced together, forming a fourth bight, so that four men can take hold at once. The shot is placed in the central space, C. When finished for permanent use, the parts at A A A A are served with yarn, so that the space C will keep its proper size. The knot is used in hot countries to sling water-jars, or "mon-keys," as they are called, so that they will swing and keep the water cool.

Only a few of the knots known to sailors have been described; but we hope the selection has been judicious, and will save many of our readers from needless trouble when they attempt to tie knots that are expected to do their duty.

## *AMATEUR THEATRICALS.*

SO much interest is felt in amateur theatricals, even by those little acquainted with the best manner of presenting them, that a few practical hints in this regard may be found of service.

### THE PLAY.

Of course, the first step is to choose the play. The preference of the performers, as to the kind of piece to be enacted, having been definitely ascertained, a committee should be appointed to select the particular piece, and no change of programme should then be permitted. This course is essential,

because, if it be not strictly followed, everybody will be offering suggestions and insisting on plans, which can only have the effect of destroying all concert of action. The chief trouble with amateurs is that they aim too high ; that they want to do more than they have the mind or means for doing. They have an ardent prejudice in favor of Shakespeare or Schiller, when Robertson or Boucicault is fully up to their level. As a rule, historic dramas are to be avoided. They require scenery, costumes, and properties, both difficult and expensive to get. Moreover, historic characters are hard to portray—quite beyond the intellectual range of an average amateur company. Contemporaneous pieces, especially light comedies and farces, are comparatively easy of representation, and the actors and actresses are all more or less at home in them, from the fact that the mimic scene is but a variation of their own lives.

Scenes from well-known novels are much more satisfactory for amateur performances than the little farces of the day, which many of the audience have seen represented at the best theaters, by actors whom no amateurs can hope to equal. A little ingenuity can adapt almost any part of Dickens's novels; and stories are constantly appearing which can be very easily converted into plays, and have a freshness and a reality which are wholly lacking in "Box and Cox," and "Poor Pillicoddy." If the scene in itself has some literary merit, *all* the interest of the representation will not depend upon the acting, which is a great advantage to the performers. It is hardly worth while for intelligent young people to spend weeks in committing to memory what they desire to forget as soon as the curtain falls, when they might, while winning the same dramatic laurels, have stored their minds with something worth remembering.

#### THE STAGE MANAGER.

After the play has been decided upon, the stage manager should be chosen. He ought to be the one who has most acquaintance with the stage, and he ought not to be a performer. His will must be law; there must be no appeal from



it. If he be a performer, other members of the company may take exception to his ruling, under the impression that his opinion as a manager is influenced by his interest as an actor; and thus suspicion and discord may be engendered. He must have entire and absolute charge of the stage business, which means everything belonging to the action of the play. He must be present at every rehearsal; assign to every actor or actress his or her position; tell each how to enter; how to go off; what intonations to give; what gestures to make. He should indicate the facial expression and by-play; should carefully instruct in regard to dress, and every particular of the character assumed.

If the players be dissatisfied with his directions, they may mention the fact to him in private, but during the rehearsal they should yield to him implicit obedience. Should he feel inclined to act upon their suggestions, he can do so at the next rehearsal. It is his duty, likewise, to cast the parts, and for this he should use his best judgment and discrimination. When the parts are once cast, there must be no demur. Nevertheless, should he, after one or more rehearsals, discover that he has made a mistake in assigning any of the characters, he should rectify it at once. Those who may be changed ought not to complain, even if the change should wound their vanity a little, since their private feelings must give way to the general good.

Nothing is more disagreeable or difficult for the stage manager than the arrangement of the cast. Each person is apt to think that he or she is especially fitted to be the hero or heroine; and as it is hard to find a drama made up of heroes and heroines, some of the performers are unavoidably doomed to disappointment. Those chosen for the minor characters should remember that they are as necessary to the proper production of the piece as their histrionic superiors. If a man or woman has dramatic talent, it can be shown anywhere, and it often happens that one who takes a small part wins more laurels than the leading players.

The performers should not forget that the position of stage

manager is as thankless as it is arduous. Upon him rests the entire responsibility; he receives none of the honors of triumph, and gets all the blame of failure.

#### THE PROMPTER.

Next to the stage manager, the prompter ranks in importance. Sometimes the two offices are combined in the same person, but this is not wise, as each has quite enough to do. The prompter's position is usually on the left-hand of the stage, near the greenroom, where he takes his stand in full view of the actors, though unseen by the audience, with the text before him. He should be at every rehearsal as well as at the regular performance, so as to familiarize the amateurs with the sound of his voice and his manner of prompting. Learning when, where, and how much to depend on him at rehearsal, they will not be at a loss when the trying hour comes.

One thing for the prompter to guard against is hurrying the players, who should have ample time not only to speak their lines, but to complete their stage business. Any haste on the part of the prompter renders the actor nervous; nervousness affects the memory and mars the acting. For instance, if the player, after repeating a line or two, desires to cross the stage before continuing, he should have full leisure to do so, instead of having the muttered words hurled at him again and again, as if he had forgotten them. Let the prompter be sure that the actor's memory has failed before he prompts.

It may be mentioned here that haste is one of the evils to which amateurs are exposed. They seem to be afraid that they won't advance fast enough, and the result is, they rush on at such a rate as to impair the sympathy of the audience and the symmetry of the play. They should always bear in mind that the greatest haste is the worst speed; that they not only lose nothing but gain much by deliberation and repose.

It is the province of the prompter to see that the actors are called in time to make their entrance on the stage. He

should, also, have ready anything that they may need as part of the business, whether going on or while on the stage. If a servant have to carry a letter to his master, the prompter must have the letter at hand, and deliver it to the servant at the proper moment; and so, if he have occasion to take in a bottle of wine, or a newspaper, or a basket of flowers. Should the curtain rise upon a dinner or supper table, the prompter must have everything to set the table with before the scene begins. If swords, guns, or pistols be needed, he must supply them in the nick of time. At the regular theaters this devolves upon the property man; but at amateur entertainments the prompter generally adds the duties of the property man to his own, and so simplifies the matter.

#### REHEARSALS.

The success of any dramatic representation will depend very largely on rehearsals, which cannot be too often repeated or too accurately given. The enthusiasm with which amateurs begin is liable to ooze out with the study and hard work that their enterprise demands. They make a great mistake who imagine that creditable acting of any sort is easily achieved. No one can hope to gain a histrionic crown, even in private circles, without severe and unremitting labor. Amateur theatricals ill rendered are too dull for pastime and too inane for improvement. The actors must, from the start, anticipate many vexations and disappointments, and devote themselves to earnest effort. They must work not only hard but harmoniously, aiming at a rounded whole rather than at individual distinction. They must rehearse with strict conscientiousness, and punctuality of attendance must always be observed. They must go over their parts again and again, until they be perfect in business as well as in text—until, in a word, they are entirely accustomed to their character, and to every detail thereof.

When practicable, it is better, generally, to rehearse on the stage where the play is to be given, so that all sense of strangeness shall be removed. At least two dress rehearsals

should be given there, and as many more as convenient. At these the stage should be set, and everything arranged precisely as it is to be at the regular performance. The number of rehearsals required will depend on the aptitude of the actors, some of whom will evince an order of talent that others must hope to approach by severe study alone. It is the privilege of the stage manager to call as many rehearsals as he deems necessary to insure a successful performance.

#### THE STAGE.

A genuine stage in a public hall is very desirable, for then and there the facilities for effective representation will be far ampler than in a private house. Many halls have scenes, curtains, and foot-lights, always difficult to improvise, and in small towns still more difficult to get. In New York, and in all the large cities, scenery can be bought or hired,—sometimes borrowed,—and be forwarded by express without much expense. If the unprofessionals be obliged to depend on themselves, they must choose simple pieces, for nearly all of which two scenes will suffice—one that of a wood or outdoor scene, and the other an interior, that may be converted at will into a library, bed-chamber, dining-hall, or drawing-room. No town that would aspire to theatricals can fail to furnish some one capable of painting the little that may be needed under such circumstances.

Any piece that is to be presented in a parlor should be confined to one scene, and that an interior. The furniture of the household can readily be utilized, and the curtain and foot-lights can be managed without much trouble. One of the hardest things to arrange in a parlor is the exits and the entrances, which, in a hall, are usually provided for. French windows, closets, and piazzas may be turned to good account in private houses, where the ingenuity and invention of women invariably reveal unexpected resources. A little book called "The Amateur's Guide" contains much valuable and practical information, with many details for which we have no space.



## THE COSTUMES.

Historic and character dresses can be hired nowadays from professional costumers in large cities, who will send them to any place or person on receipt of order and the required deposit. When convenient, it is well for the amateur to select personally such garments as he may wish, because by such selection he may the better suit his stature, form, and complexion. Generally it is cheaper for him to patronize costumers than to devise or have elaborate dresses made, not to speak of the likelihood of their greater correctness. The advantage of contemporaneous dramas is that the private wardrobes of the players will serve every purpose.

The dresses should not be chosen by each individual, but decided upon by a committee of taste, who should see that the colors blend properly, that inharmonious hues be not brought into juxtaposition, and that anachronisms of raiment be not introduced. Such faults are not seldom committed at the theaters, though this is no reason why they should be repeated by amateurs. Let it be left to professionals to present *Norma* in kid gloves and crinoline, and *Claude Melnotte* in the court garb of Louis XIV. Ladies portraying noble Venetians of the Middle Ages should not appear in French boots, and gentlemen wearing perukes should have artistic conscience enough to sacrifice side-whiskers.

Persons far removed from social centers and costumers need not despair of mere domestic resources. A little patience, reflection, and mother wit will reveal to them undreamed-of possibilities; while necessity will fashion from cast-off garments fantastic raiment and sartorial splendors.

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*THE SEA-WEED ALBUM.*

“WELL, children,” said Mrs. Bright, one evening at dinner, “to-morrow, if all is well, we shall take our long-talked-of holiday. Would you like to go inland, up the Hudson, or to the sea-side?”

“Do go to the sea-side, mamma,” said Arthur, an impulsive fellow of eleven; “what I want is a bath in the sea.”

“And so do I,” said Clara, a bright girl of ten.

“Yes, do go to the sea-side, mamma,” said Alice, the eldest daughter; “I’d like to collect sea-weeds. Don’t you remember, you promised a good while ago to show me how to prepare them?”

“Sea-weeds!” sneered Arthur; “how absurd to gather those ugly, dry-smelling things! What fun can there be in that?”

“Wait till you see,” answered Alice, quietly.

“As all seem agreed on the sea-side, where shall we go?” asked Mrs. Bright. “Long Branch is rather far off for our limited time, and even Rockaway; what do you say to Coney Island?”

“Coney Island, by all means,” echoed Clara and Arthur.

“That will do nicely, mamma,” said Alice.

“Settled,” said Mrs. Bright. “I can only spare the afternoon. So that after bathing and lunch you can only have an hour for beach work. But, as you know, Alice, a great deal may be done even in less time, if you work with a will.”

“Who taught you to prepare sea-weeds, mamma?” asked Clara.

“Your grandma. When you know something of it, there is no study so interesting as natural history. But most people, and especially children, require to have the book of nature opened before they can see its beauties, and have to be shown where to look, what to look at, and how to look. And so with the study of sea-weeds.”

“Will you teach us?” said Clara and Arthur together.

“Certainly,” answered Mrs. Bright, who was always anxious to impart information, but wished first to create an

interest, and thus make the desire come from the children themselves.

"What will you do with the sea-weeds when you get them?" asked Arthur.

"Make a scrap-book, like your stamp-album. Mamma says you can have no idea how pretty a carefully made sea-weed album is."

Next day was one of glee. It was the first and perhaps the only excursion of the year. The steamer, lunch, and bath were thoroughly enjoyed.

"Now, children," said Mrs. Bright, "the boat starts homeward in an hour; go and gather your sea-weeds and put them into the empty basket."

Off they ran. But they seemed to have scarcely begun when the steamer whistled, and they had just time to get on board. After dinner the basket was produced. Arthur and Clara had gathered quite a heap, but most of it was old, dried, and had to be thrown away. Alice had listened better to her mother's advice, and had selected only what was moist and fresh.

"Now," said Mrs. Bright, "put the pieces you have kept into a basin of fresh water, to clean them from salt and sand, and leave them there while you get some white paper, an old linen rag, and some blotting-paper. Also, a soup-plate filled with fresh water, and a small camel's-hair brush."

"All ready, mamma," said Alice, who had prepared them the night before.

"Now, watch me closely," said Mrs. Bright. "You see, I first select a nice piece of weed. Then put it into the soup-plate, where it floats. Then I slightly damp a sheet of white paper, and slip it under the weed [Figure 1], and raise it till the



FIG. 1. PUTTING THE SEA-WEED ON THE PAPER.

latter is half dry. Then, with the brush, I spread it out nicely [Figure 2]. My aim is to make a pretty picture. Now, I gently raise the paper with the weed on it out of the water, and let it drip for a second or two. The more taste you have, and the more care you take, the greater will be your success."

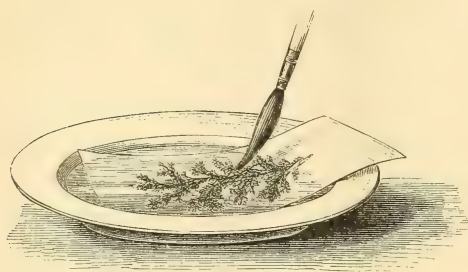


FIG. 2. ARRANGING THE SEA-WEED.

the paper and weed *on* a piece of blotting-paper, and *over* it a piece of linen rag. Then over that again another sheet of blotting-paper" (Figure 3).

"Why, mamma?" asked Clara.

"The blotting-paper dries the weed, but would stick to it but for the rag. Now, Alice, do the rest yourself; never mind a few failures. Practice is the best teacher."

"That is fairly done," said Mrs. Bright, when Alice brought her first attempt. "Now, put yours on top of mine, and so on, till you have finished the whole."

"Shall I make more than one specimen of each kind?" asked Alice.

"Yes, you may keep several duplicates, for exchange with other collectors."

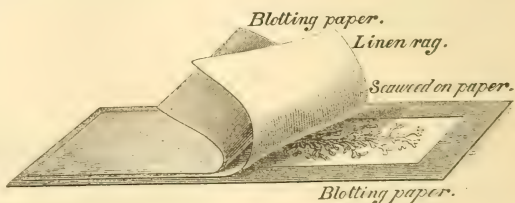


FIG. 3. DRYING THE SEA-WEED.

"Now, mamma," said Alice, after a time, "I have finished. See what a pile. What shall I do next?"

"Put the heap between two boards [Figure 4], and place any weight, say a few books, over them; three or four days will fully dry them."



"We must not forget the sea-weeds," said Arthur, a few days after. "Mamma, shall I undo them?"

"Yes; but first turn up the edge of one, to see if they are quite dry. Then remove the blotting-paper and rag from each very gently, so as not to pull the weed off. Most sea-weeds are of a gummy nature, and stick to the paper. But the harder ones sometimes require a little mucilage or paste to keep them in place."

"How lovely," cried Arthur, as each was uncovered, "and what a number of them! Alice, can you spare specimens of each for Clara and me?"

"Of course I can," said Alice. "But, mamma, please show me now how to put them into my album. Here it is."

"When your specimens are large, you can only put one on a page. All you have to do is to touch each corner on the back lightly with mucilage, and put it neatly into your book. If they are small, you can put several, and sometimes a good many, on one page. With a little taste and care you may arrange them very

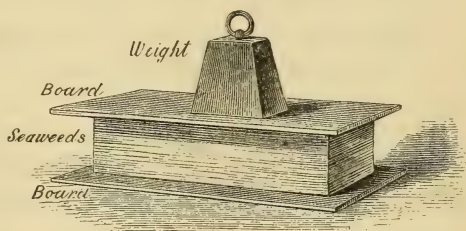


FIG. 4. THE PRESS.

prettilly. You have already nine different kinds of sea-weeds from one place, gathered in half an hour, and including specimens of each of the three great classes into which they are divided, viz.: the red sea-weeds (*rhodospermeæ*); the olive-colored (*melanospermeæ*), and the green (*chlorospermeæ*), and at every new place you visit you may get new ones."

"I wonder, mamma," said Alice, "if Cousin Frank, in Havana, could get me some?"

"Why not write and ask him? Some tropical sea-weeds are exceedingly delicate and pretty, especially those found on coral islands and reefs. And you might also enlist friends in many other parts of the world. Then you have friends near the Lakes, and also the Mississippi; for, you must know, there

are fresh as well as salt water weeds. And thus in time you may have a valuable collection, both of native and foreign sea-weeds."

"What shall I do with my duplicates, mamma?" asked Alice.

"Keep them at the end of your album; you may soon meet with or hear of other collectors glad to exchange specimens."

"But what *are* sea-weeds?" asked Arthur.

"They are plants which grow in water, just as grass does on land, and are usually fixed to the rocks by roots. Those you found on the sands had been broken off by the waves. A few, however, float about; for example, the celebrated gulf-weed, which has a place in American history. You remember that Columbus's small ships, just before he discovered this continent, got entangled in the 'Sargasso Sea' of gulf-weed, and the men were frightened lest they should not get out of it."

"Are sea-weeds only found at the edge of the sea, mamma?" asked Alice.

"They are most abundant near the sea-shore; but I have no doubt that they exist all over the sea-bottom, wherever they can get root-hold and a suitable place to live. Like land plants, they cannot live everywhere. Deep-sea weeds are generally very delicate, rare, and valuable, because difficult to get."

"Are sea-weeds of any use?" asked Arthur.

"Certainly. There are various uses for them. Many kinds of fish live on them, just as cows and sheep feed on grass. In Gothland the great bladder-weed is used to feed pigs, and hence called 'swine-tang.' In times of scarcity, even horses and cattle thrive on it. Several kinds of sea-weed are eaten as a delicacy in north-western Europe. In Ireland, a sweetmeat is made of dulse. In Kamschatka, they make a fermented drink of sea-weed. In China and Japan, they make soup of a swallow's-nest which is constructed of a peculiar variety of sea-weed.

"Again, laver is used as a medicine. Iodine and other valuable chemicals are got from sea-weeds. Others make glue

and varnish. When dried they are used for fuel, and also manure. And, no doubt, some kinds of sea-weed found along our coasts might be often used as an edible vegetable."

Acting on her mother's advice, Alice wrote to her uncles and cousins, and, before long, fine specimens came from most of them; so that, in time, she had a truly beautiful sea-weed album, which any of our readers may also have if they live near the sea and choose to take a little trouble.

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### *ILLUMINATING TEXTS.*

THERE are two ways in which texts can be illuminated. You can buy a square or oblong of perforated paper at a fancy-shop, with the text outlined upon it in pale gray, and, with floss and split zephyr worsteds, you can work the letters, shade them, and produce very pretty effects. Or you can take a bit of bristol-board, measure and sketch your own letters, and make them of any beautiful colors you like with a camel's-hair brush and water-paints. Some people practice still a third method, with oil-paints and a wooden panel; but this is more difficult, and so few of you boys and girls have oil-paints, or know how to use them, that it is not worth our while to speak further on this method. Neither is it worth while to say much about the first way, for however pretty the perforated embroidery may look when it is done, and however neat the stitches may be, it can never have the freedom or value of a text done in the second way; nor can the doing of it ever give the same pleasure. Still, since some of you may like to try it, I will add that all the rules for grouping and distributing the colors, according to their symbolic meanings, apply to the embroidered as well as to the painted illuminations, and it will be quite safe to follow them in laying out your work.

## TEXTS PAINTED IN WATER-COLOR.

The paints absolutely necessary for illuminating purposes are four in number: black, white, vermilion, and cobalt, or ultramarine blue. Most paint-boxes contain these four; but for any of you who do not happen to have a paint-box, I would recommend buying what are called the "half-moist" colors, which are the pleasantest and easiest to use. Buy half a cake of each of those mentioned, and, besides, lemon yellow, carmine, gamboge, Prussian blue, and burnt umber. If you want to make your list very complete, you may add sepia, sap-green, rose-madder, cadmium, neutral tint, and violet carmine; but these are luxuries, not necessities, and you can do very well without them. Gold and silver paints are, however, indispensable. The best are those which come in tiny shells or saucers; but these are also the most costly. A good substitute is the preparation known as "Bessemer's Gold." It is a fine dry powder, sold in small bottles, with larger bottles of a liquid which dissolves it, the price of the two bottles being seventy-five cents. They last a long time, and are much cheaper than the little shells, which cost twenty cents apiece, and barely hold gold enough for a single capital letter.

The bristol-board should be thick and smooth. A pale tint of gray or cream is better in most cases than white. Two brushes are needed, a large and a small, besides a third brush kept exclusively for the gold paint. For other implements, you will want only a lead-pencil and ruler; but, above all, you want that care and patience so indispensable for producing anything really fine, delicate, or worth having. There is no royal road to anything, remember. All our little successes must be earned step by step, slowly and faithfully, with nothing shirked, nothing hurried, and we must be willing to give the time which is needed to make each step perfect in its way before we pass on to another.

After the materials, the next thing to be considered is the design. Pretty patterns for letters can be picked up almost



anywhere—from signs, newspaper headings, book-covers, or the ornamental work in churches. A little practice will make it easy to vary and combine them. There is a “Book of Alphabets” also, published by Mr. Prang, of Boston, which it would not be a bad idea for boys and girls who live near each other to club for and buy. Its price is two dollars and a half; it contains an alphabet of capitals in color, and of small letters in a dozen different styles, ancient and modern, and is a great help to young beginners.

The first step, after trimming the bristol-board to its proper size, is to measure the spaces and draw parallel lines, between which the letters can be sketched in with lead pencil. Make the pencil lines *very light*, that they may not show through the color. Next, paint in all the small letters, being careful to keep the edges neat and distinct, to dot the *i*, and to add the commas and period. A mixture of white with the other paints makes it much easier to put them in smoothly. This mixture is known to artists as “body color.” After the small letters are finished and shaded, paint the capitals in the same way; and, last of all, add the gold and the ornamental touches, the flowers, vines, arabesques, and little hints of contrast, which add so much to the richness of the effect. I cannot tell you what colors to use, or what designs, for these depend on your own taste and fancy, and every worker must make them out for himself. But if you begin with simple things,—with a single line, for instance,—a line which says something brave, or sweet, or comforting (the Bible is full of such lines), painting it in plain gray letters, shaded on one edge with black, and one vivid capital in scarlet, or blue and gold, you will have done a valuable and delightful thing; and going on little by little, your powers will increase, till by and by you produce work which is beautiful for its own sake as well as for that of the thought which it enshrines.

I will add a list of rules for the choice and placing of the colors. Every color has a meaning—did you know that?—and there are certain words which must always be painted in certain colors, and no other.

## GENERAL RULES FOR COLORING.

*Rule 1.* Capitals and initials should always be of a different color, or ornamented differently, from other letters of the text.

*Rule 2.* Letters belonging to words which do not begin with a capital must all be of one color.

*Rule 3.* It is not necessary that all the letters should be shaded, but the shaded letters in the same sentence should be shaded on the same side. Black or dark-brown shading makes a red letter appear more brilliant. If one letter in a sentence is lightened with gold or bright color, the other letters must be lightened to correspond.

*Rule 4.* Never paint an unimportant word in a striking color.

*Rule 5.* Sacred names, such as Christ, God, Lord, Saviour, Creator, should always be painted in red, black, and gold. The letters I. H. S. should also be in red, black, and gold, and all personal pronouns referring to Deity, such as Him, His, Thy, Thine, must be in the same colors, which are called *canonical*.

*Rule 6.* Do not use these colors combined except in words denoting the Deity, or pronouns referring to Him. Ever since the first gospel was illuminated this rule has been observed; red being used to signify love, and sometimes also creative power; gold, to signify glory; and black, awe or majesty. If you notice, you will find these colors constantly used in the decoration of churches.

*Rule 7.* It is not desirable to use gold and silver in the same word. Never put a blue letter next to a purple or green one. Gold harmonizes with all colors.

## MEANINGS OF COLORS.

Various nations hold traditions about the meanings of colors. Even our North American Indians have ideas upon this subject, and, strangely enough, these traditions agree in the main all the world over. These are some of them :

Red is the color of life and happiness. It is from this idea that the expression "red-letter days" comes.

Blue is the color of heaven, and should be used for words which denote heavenly things, such as piety, truth, constancy, divine contemplation.

Yellow or gold means not only glory, but faith, goodness, marriage.

Green symbolizes spring, youth, mirth, hope in immortality; also victory, as in the palm and laurel, which are emblems of a conqueror.

Violet means suffering.

Gray, the color of ashes, means humility, mourning, and penitence.

Purple was the color of pomp and royal state. Kings and emperors allowed this color to be used in churches, otherwise it would have been sacred to imperial use. In former days, princes, even in their cradles, wore this color, hence the phrase, "Born in the purple."

White denotes innocence, light, faith, joy, religious purity. Sometimes silver is employed in place of white.

Black typifies night, darkness, death, sin, mourning, and *negation*. It is proper to use black in such words as no, never, not, nevermore.

You understand that I do not prescribe these colors to be used always exactly after these rules; but it is well to know the rules, and, as they may be helpful to some of you, I give them. The best rule is *taste*, and that is a thing that grows by using. So don't be discouraged, any of you, if you chance not to succeed the first time, but remember Robert Bruce and the spider, and "Try, try again."

## PART V. SICKNESS AND HEALTH.

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### *A PARABLE.*

ONCE there was born a man with a great genius for painting and sculpture. It was not in this world that he was born, but in a world very much like this in some respects, and very different in others. The world in which this great genius was born was governed by a beneficent and wise ruler, who had such wisdom and such power that he decided before each being was born for what purpose he would be best fitted in life; he then put him in the place best suited to the work he was to do; and he gave into his hands a set of instruments to do the work with.

There was one peculiarity about these instruments—they could never be replaced. On this point this great and wise ruler was inexorable. He said to every being who was born into his realm:

“Here is your set of instruments to work with. If you take good care of them they will last a life-time. If you let them get rusty or broken, you can perhaps have them brightened up a little or mended, but they will never be as good as new, and you can never have another set. Now you see how important it is that you keep them always in good order.”



This man of whom I speak had a complete set of all the tools necessary for a sculptor's work, and also a complete set of painter's brushes and colors. He was a wonderful man, for he could make very beautiful statues, and he could also paint very beautiful pictures. He became famous while he was very young, and everybody wanted something that he had carved or painted.

Now, I do not know whether it was that he did not believe what the good ruler told him about his set of instruments, or whether he did not care to keep on working any longer, but this is what happened. He grew very careless about his brushes, and let his tools lie out over-night when it was damp. He left some of his brushes full of paint for weeks, and the paint dried in, so that when at last he tried to wash it out, out came the bristles by dozens, and the brushes were entirely ruined. The dampness of the night air rusted the edges of some of his very finest tools, and the things which he had to use to clean off the rust were so powerful that they ate into the fine metal of the tools, and left the edges so uneven that they would no longer make fine strokes.

However, he kept on painting, and making statues, and doing the best he could with the few and imperfect tools he had left. But people began to say, "What is the matter with this man's pictures? and what is the matter with his statues? He does not do half as good work as he used to."

Then he was very angry, and said the people were only envious and malicious; that he was the same he always had been, and his pictures and statues were as good as ever. But he could not make anybody else think so. They all knew better.

One day, the ruler sent for him and said to him:

"Now you have reached the prime of your life. It is time that you should do some really great work. I want a grand statue made for the gate-way of one of my cities. Here is the design; take it home and study it, and see if you can undertake to execute it."

As soon as the poor sculptor studied the design, his heart sank within him. There were several parts of it which

required the finest workmanship of one of his most delicate instruments. That instrument was entirely ruined by rust. The edge was all eaten away into notches. In vain he tried all possible devices to bring it again to a fine sharp edge. Nothing could be done with it. The most experienced workmen shook their heads as soon as they saw it, and said:

"No, no, sir; it is too late. If you had brought it to us at first, we might possibly have made it sharp enough for you to use a little while with great care; but it is past help now."

Then he ran frantically around the country, trying to borrow a similar instrument from some one. But one of the most remarkable peculiarities about these sets of instruments given by the ruler of this world I am speaking of, was that they were of no use at all in the hands of anybody except the one to whom the ruler had given them. Several of the sculptor's friends were so sorry for him that they offered him their instruments in place of his own; but he tried in vain to use them. They were not fitted to his hand; he could not make the kind of stroke he wanted to make with them. So he went sadly back to the ruler, and said:

"O Sire, I am most unhappy. I cannot execute this beautiful design for your statue."

"But why cannot you execute it?" said the ruler.

"Alas, Sire!" replied the unfortunate man, "by some sad accident one of my finest tools was so rusted that it cannot be restored. Without that tool it is impossible to make this statue."

Then the ruler looked very severely at him, and said:

"O sculptor, accidents very seldom happen to the wise and careful. But you are also a painter, I believe. Perhaps you can paint the picture I wish to have painted immediately, for my new palace. Here is the drawing of it. Go home and study this. This also will be an opportunity worthy of your genius."

The poor fellow was not much comforted by this, for he remembered that he had not even looked at his brushes for a

long time. However, he took the sketch, thanked the ruler, and withdrew.

It proved to be the same with the sketch for the picture as it had been with the design for the statue. It required the finest workmanship in parts of it; and the brushes which were needed for this had been long ago destroyed. Only their handles remained. How did the painter regret his folly as he picked up the old defaced handles from the floor, and looked at them hopelessly!

Again he went to the ruler, and, with still greater embarrassment than before, acknowledged that he was unable to paint the picture because he had not the proper brushes.

This time the ruler looked at him with terrible severity, and spoke in a voice of the sternest displeasure:

"What, then, do you expect to do, sir, for the rest of your life, if your instruments are in such a condition?"

"Alas! Sire, I do not know," replied the poor man, covered with confusion.

"You deserve to starve," said the ruler; and ordered the servants to show him out of the palace.

After this, matters went from bad to worse with the painter. Every few days some one of his instruments broke under his hand. They had been so poorly taken care of, that they did not last half as long as they were meant to. His work grew poorer and poorer, until he fell so low that he was forced to eke out a miserable living by painting the walls of the commonest houses, and making the coarsest kind of water-jars out of clay. Finally his last instrument failed him. He had nothing left to work with; and as he had for many years done only very coarse and cheap work, and had not been able to lay up any money, he was driven to beg his food from door to door, and finally died of hunger.

This is the end of the parable. Next comes the moral. Now please don't skip all the rest because it is called moral. It will not be very long. I wish I had called my story a conundrum instead of a parable, and then the moral would have been the answer. How that would have puzzled you all,—a

conundrum so many pages long! And I wonder how many of you would have guessed the true answer. How many of you would have thought enough about your own bodies to have seen that they were only sets of instruments given to you to work with? The parable is a truer one than you think at first; but the longer you think the more you will see how true it is. Are we not each of us born into the world provided with one body, and only one, which must last us as long as we live in this world? Is it not by means of this body that we all learn and accomplish everything? Is it not a most wonderful and beautiful set of instruments? Can we ever replace any one of them? Can we ever have any one of them made as good as new, after it has once been seriously out of order? In one respect the parable is not a true one; for the parable tells a story of a man whose set of instruments was adapted to only two uses,—to sculpture and to painting. But it would not be easy to count up all the things which human beings can do by help of the wonderful bodies in which they live. Think for a moment of all the things you do in any one day; all the breathing, eating, drinking, and running; of all the thinking, speaking, feeling, learning you do in any one day. Now, if any one of the instruments is seriously out of order, you cannot do one of these things so well as you know how to do it. When any one of the instruments is very seriously out of order, there is always pain. If the pain is severe, you can't think of anything else while it lasts. All your other instruments are of no use to you, just because of the pain in that one which is out of order. If the pain and the disordered condition last a great while, the instrument is so injured that it is never again so strong as it was in the beginning. All the doctors in the world cannot make it so. Then you begin to be what people call an invalid; that is, a person who does not have the full use of any one part of his body; who is never exactly comfortable himself, and who is likely to make everybody about him more or less uncomfortable.

I do not know anything in this world half so strange as the way in which people neglect their bodies; that is, their set of



instruments—their one set of instruments which they can never replace, and can do very little toward mending. When it is too late, when the instruments are hopelessly out of order, then they do not neglect them any longer; then they run about frantically, as the poor sculptor did, trying to find some one to help him; and this is one of the saddest sights in the world—a man or a woman running from one climate to another climate, and from one doctor to another doctor, trying to cure or to patch up a body that is out of order.

Now, perhaps you will say this is a dismal and unnecessary sermon to preach to young people; they have their fathers and mothers to take care of them; they don't take care of themselves. Very true; but fathers and mothers cannot be always with their children; fathers and mothers cannot always make their children remember and obey their directions; more than all, it is very hard to make children realize that it is of any great importance that they should keep all the laws of health. I know when I was a little girl, when people said to me, "You must not do thus and thus; for if you do you will take cold," I used to think, "Who cares for a little cold? Supposing I do catch one?" And when I was shut up in the house for several days with a bad sore throat, and suffered horrible pain, I never reproached myself. I thought that sore throats must come now and then, whether or no, and that I must take my turn. But now I have learned that if no law of health were ever broken, we need never have a day's illness,—might grow old in entire freedom from suffering, and gradually fall asleep at last, instead of dying terrible deaths from disease,—and I am all the while wishing I had known it when I was young. If I had known it, I'll tell you just what I should have done. I would have just tried the experiment, at any rate, of never doing a single thing which could by any possibility get any one of the instruments of my body out of order. I wish I could see some boy or girl try it yet: never to sit up late at night; never to have a close, bad air in the room; never to sit with wet feet; never to wet them, if it were possible to help it; never to go out in cold weather without being properly wrapped up; never to go

out of a hot room into a cold outdoor air without throwing some extra wrap on; never to eat or drink an unwholesome thing; never to touch tea, or coffee, or candy, or pie-crust; never to let a day pass without at least two good hours of exercise in the open air; never to read a word by twilight, nor in the cars; never to let the sun be shut out of rooms. This is a pretty long list of "nevers," but "never" is the only word that conquers. "Once in a while" is the very watch-word of temptation and defeat. I do believe that the "once in a while" things have ruined more bodies—and more souls, too—than all the other things put together. Moreover, the "never" way is easy, and the "once in a while" way is hard. After you have once made up your mind "never" to do a certain thing, that is the end of it, if you are a sensible person. But if you only say, "This is a bad habit," or, "This is a dangerous indulgence; I will be a little on my guard and not do it too often," you have put yourself in the most uncomfortable of all positions; the temptation will knock at your door twenty times a day, and you will have to be fighting the same old battle over and over again as long as you live. This is especially true in regard to the matter of which I have been speaking to you—the care of the body. When you have once laid down to yourself the laws you mean to keep, the things you will always do, and the things you will "*never*" do, then your life arranges itself in a system at once, and you are not interrupted and hindered, as the undecided people are, by wondering what is best, or safe, or wholesome, or too unwholesome, at different times.

Don't think it would be a sort of slavery to give up so much for the sake of keeping your body in order. It is the only real freedom, though at first it does not look so much like freedom as the other way. It is the sort of freedom of which some poet sang once. I never knew who he was. I heard the lines only once, and have forgotten all except the last three, but I think of those every day. He was speaking of the true freedom which there is in keeping the laws of nature, and he said it was like the freedom of the true poet, who





ONE OF THE GIRLS.



“Always sings  
In strictest bonds of rhyme and rule,  
And finds in them not bonds, but wings.”

I think the difference between a person who has kept all the laws of health, and thereby has a good, strong, sound body that can carry him wherever he wants to go, and do whatever he wants to do, and a person who has let his body get all out of order, so that he has to lie in bed half his time and suffer, is quite as great a difference as there is between a creature with wings and a creature without wings. Don't you?

And this is the end of the moral.

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### *NERVES IN THE HOUSEHOLD.*

THERE is hardly an American family in which some member is not a victim to some sort of nervous disease—neuralgia, hysteria, the extreme of epilepsy, or the mild form of constant “tire.” Women, oftener young than old, are frequently mere bundles of nerves; thin and bloodless, living on morphine and valerian, known only in their homes or social lives by their sufferings, which are real enough to carry them to the edge of the grave, if too vague for any ordinary medicine to touch. An eminent physician has hit upon a system of treatment for this class of invalids, which is said to be successful. He removes them from home, changes the whole material and moral atmosphere about them, puts them to bed, and forbids them to move hand or foot. They are overfed five times a day. The lack of exercise is supplied by kneading the entire body, and by electricity. The patient goes to bed a skeleton, and comes out, it is said, fat and rosy. The secret in this treatment is absolute rest, and the reduction of the patient to the condition of a mere animal.

If this principle be correct, there is no reason why every mother should not apply it in the treatment of her nervous

patient (for she is sure to have one). Her husband is overworked in the office or shop; he grows thinner, more irritable; every month his appetite fails; he cannot sleep, complains of dull vacuity at the base of the brain, of a stricture like an iron band about his jaws. There is no time to lose. If possible, lift the weight a little. Adopt a cheaper, simpler style of living, let the floors go uncarpeted, or take out the money in the savings-bank. There will come no rainier day than this. Give him a month's absolute holiday free from worry and work, feed him well, amuse him. Let this holiday be taken in the country, or somewhere on the water, out of sight or hearing of his daily work and cares. Nine chances out of ten, he will come back a new man.

Or it is one of the boys who is pale, who has constant headaches, whose face jerks strangely in the spring, who has moody fancies, complains of injustice, has doubts of the Bible. It is the boy who is head of his class, too. The lad does not need moral discipline, or appeals to his feelings or his faith. Take him from school, and from home; turn him into a farm for a year. He will learn some things there as useful in his future life as Greek or geometry. Make him bathe regularly, eat heartily, drink milk and beef-tea, sleep early at night and late in the morning. It is not the mind but the machine that needs repairing.

Or it is the mother's own arm or head that tortures her with neuralgia. At any cost, give the suffering part heat and absolute rest; wrap it in cotton and flannels to exclude the air. Let the arm stop its working and the brain its thinking.

In short, the home treatment of all nervous disorders should be based on three words: change, warmth, and rest.

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*BETTER THAN MEDICINE.*

THERE is a sort of practical every-day knowledge in which our grandmothers were wise, which the present generation of mothers, with all their advance in the sciences, in the arts, and in matters of taste, are apt to neglect. The doctor, for example, is now a most costly member of every well-to-do family, called in for every ache or qualm. If he be of the advanced school and have faith in patience, nature, and "letting-alone," no harm is done; but many a practitioner feels that he must earn his money by a certain amount of drugs. The mother soon becomes familiar with his favorite remedy. If the children have eaten too much candy, and need a day's fasting, or a long walk in the open air, she fires pills of quinine, or pellets of arnica, belladonna, or arsenic, wildly down their throats, or plumps them into "sitzes" and "packs," or puts the poles of the galvanic battery to their trembling backs, heads, or throats. This modern Cornelia brings up her young Gracchi by the heroic treatment alone. She scouts simple, easy preventives and commonplace bits of knowledge. She goes to art classes, in order to fit her to criticise the human body; but she knows nothing of the anatomy of her baby's foot, and mangles and deforms it in heeled shoes. She knows precisely what chemical elements enter into every object in nature, and looks back with compassion on the generation who never heard of molecules. But she feeds her family on bread, pickles, confectionery, and pastry, bought at the nearest shop, all more or less poisonous with copper, alum, and mineral dyes. Her old grandmother, a veritable ignoramus in her eyes, fed her children on home-made food; the fame of her pies and roasts went abroad through the country, and her boys' stout limbs and the rosy cheeks of her girls bore witness to their merits.

Little Mrs. Dodd, whose matter-of-fact method of teaching her boys we have spoken of before, believes that the chief requisite in a housekeeper, or head of a family, is this practical knowledge. "Look," she says, "how every paper and

magazine recognizes this lack in women, and tries to supply it with recipes for cookery, simple remedies, popular adaptations of scientific knowledge to every-day life." She keeps her eyes and ears open for such suggestions, but tests them thoroughly before using them in her family. She knows the physical requirements and peculiarities of husband, children, and servants, and wards off indigestion here, neuralgia there, rheumatism from one, nervous debility from another, by a change of diet, or clothing, or temperature, a little wholesome hard work, or a holiday and adventure into the country or to the city. She knows just what to do before the doctor comes, in case of a burn, or fall, or sprain; and just when to stop doing, which is a rarer knowledge. All these things are trifles, people may say. But Mrs. Dodd is always quoting old Ben Franklin's maxim, that human happiness consists not in great pieces of good fortune that rarely happen, but in the little comforts and advantages of every day.

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### *HINTS ON THE USE AND CARE OF THE EYES.*

CONSIDERING the extreme delicacy of the visual apparatus, it is astonishing what an amount of hard usage it will bear when in a perfectly healthy and normal condition. On the contrary, let the nice adaptability of the different parts of the complex mechanism become in any manner deranged, and it is equally astonishing how

"Small things may be boisterous there."

In this particular it is like a piece of finely adjusted machinery. So long as the equilibrium of forces is maintained, the machine may run for an indefinite length of time, with no detriment to its component parts. But let a pinion



become loose or a cog break, and soon of its own inherent power the apparatus tears itself to pieces.

Those whose eyes are in a condition of perfect health will fail to understand adequately the stress laid upon apparently trivial matters in the succeeding remarks. But those who have suffered from any defect or weakness of the eyes will comprehend at once the great importance of the seemingly most insignificant point mentioned. The former class of individuals, however, should have quite as much interest in the matter as the latter, for the old proverb that "one ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" can find no fitter application than in the care of the eyes.

It is hardly necessary to state that the natural stimulus of the organ of vision, and consequently the one best adapted for illuminating purposes, is daylight. Still, this natural stimulus may, on occasion, be so intense as to require toning down. No one who has traversed the streets of the lower Italian cities on a clear day, during the summer or autumn months, can have failed to notice how trying the bright glare is to the eyes. The brilliancy of the cloudless sky, united to the brightness of the reflection from the white stones and dust of the streets, is quite unbearable by the strongest eyes, and in those unaccustomed to these conditions, especially if there is an inherent weakness of the eyes, the result generally is some degree of inflammation. The same is true of traveling over the snow in a sunshiny day. It is always best to use, during the exposure to such intense light, what are called "protective spectacles." These are simply spectacles of plane glasses, *i. e.*, glasses which are not curved so as to refract the light from its course, tinted either in blue or gray. I presume the advocates of the "blue-glass cure" would ascribe other virtues to the blue spectacles than that of merely modulating the light. That is a subject which I do not propose to discuss here, but will simply state that blue glass has been recommended because the blue rays of light have been considered as having a less irritable effect upon the retina than the rays of other colors, and experience seems to support the view. Some, however,

contend that we should modulate all the colors in equal proportion, and employ for that purpose the "smoked" or gray glass. My own observation would seem to show that there is an individual difference as to choice between the blue and the gray tint. Some persons feel more comfortable with the blue, others with the gray, glass, and as the comfort of the individual is the end in view, we should lay no great stress upon scientific theories in regard to the matter. By all means let that be chosen which gives the greater relief. It is to be remarked, however, that green glasses seldom give the ease that either the gray or blue do,—there is a quantity of yellow in the green light, and of all colors yellow is the most trying to the eyes.

The dissatisfaction with some varieties of smoked glass no doubt arises from the *yellow* light, which an inferior quality allows to pass through.

But, unfortunately, we cannot command daylight at all times when we wish to use the eyes for the business or pleasures of life. Our civilization demands that we turn a portion of night into day, and artificial means must be found for the purpose of illumination.

There are, perhaps, more individuals who ascribe their weakness of sight to a use of their eyes under an insufficient artificial illumination than to any other one cause. In a great many instances this may not be strictly true, but there can be no doubt that faulty artificial light is one of the most productive causes of a certain class of injuries to which the eye can be exposed. The two sources of trouble with the ordinary artificial lights are—first, that they are not pure white, and, secondly, that they are unsteady. The first defect is found in all artificial lights except the lime, electric, and magnesium lights; the second especially in candles and gas. The yellowness is, in a measure, counteracted by using, in the case of lamps and gas, chimneys of a violet or blue tint, and the flickering of the gas may be obviated largely by employing an Argand burner. All things considered, a German student-lamp furnishes the most satisfactory light. The next best is

gas with an Argand burner. The chimneys of both may, as above suggested, be advantageously of a light-blue tint.

The position of the light in relation to the body is of great importance. If a shade is used on the lamp or burner (it should, by preference, be of ground or "milk" glass, never of colored glass), the light may stand directly in front of the body and the work be allowed to lie in the light under the shade, which will protect the eyes from the glare of the flame. If no shade is used, the back should be turned to the source of light, which ought to fall over the left shoulder. The same rule applies in the management of daylight. In this case, the light should come from behind and slightly above, and fall directly on the work, whence it is reflected to the eye. It should never fall directly in the face.

The light in the room during sleep is also not without its influence. As a rule, the room during sleeping hours should be dark; and, in particular, care should be taken to avoid sleeping opposite a window where, on opening the eyes in the morning, a flood of strong light will fall on them. Even the strongest eyes are, after the repose of the night, more or less sensitive to the impression of intense light. The eyes must have time to accustom themselves to the stimulus.

Attention should be called to the injurious effects that sometimes follow reading in railroad cars. On account of the unsteadiness of the page, reading under these circumstances is exceedingly trying to the eyes, and should never be persisted in for any considerable length of time.

During convalescence from severe illness, the eyes are generally the last to regain their lost power. Especially is this the case with women after child-birth, and too much care cannot be taken to put as little strain upon the eyes as possible at this time.

There is nothing more refreshing to the tired eyes than a judicious bathing in cold water. When, after use, the eyes feel hot and uncomfortable, are slightly red and have a feeling of fatigue, a few handfuls of cold water will sometimes act like magic. The habit which some have of immersing the face in a basin of water and opening the eyes, so as to allow the water

to come in direct contact with the ball, does not answer the purpose; in fact, it frequently gives rise to very uncomfortable symptoms caused by a swelling of the epithelial covering of the eye. The proper mode is to take a large basin of cold water, and bending the head close over it, with both hands to throw the water with some force on the lids gently closed. This has something of the same effect as a shower-bath, and has a toning-up influence which water applied in any other way has not. Another method of accomplishing the same end is by means of a spray-producer or atomizer, such as ladies frequently use at their toilet. In this case, a little spirits of any kind, or bay rum, added to the water of the atomizer, will increase somewhat the good effect.

Perhaps this is as appropriate a place as any to warn our readers against the so-called "eye-cups" which are extensively advertised. They are recommended as "giving strength to the eye," "preserving the sight," and obviating the necessity of glasses by removing the "flattening" of the eye from age. Irremediable mischief is liable to be done by this apparatus. It is simply a cup, fitting air-tight around the eye-socket, and to which is attached a hollow rubber ball similar to that of an atomizer. When the cup is applied to the socket and the ball is squeezed, the air is expelled from around the eyeball, and when the ball again assumes its shape, an undue quantity of blood is drawn into the eye and surrounding parts because of the relief of a portion of the atmospheric pressure. As a result, it is true, the eye does become fuller, and in some instances it may have the effect to enable the individual to see somewhat better objects near at hand, but always with a sacrifice of good distant vision.

The positive harm caused by these eye-cups comes from the congestion of the eye which they inevitably bring about. It is impossible for this congestion of the delicate tissues which enter into the structure of the eye to be continued for any length of time without inducing disease, and that character of disease, too, which is, in a large number of cases, outside the pale of our remedial measures.



It may also not be out of place to say a word here in regard to the influence of tobacco on vision. As this is a question which is still *sub judice* in the profession, we are not warranted in making any positive utterances. The English ophthalmic surgeons believe strongly in the "tobacco amaurosis," and we have seen in the English hospitals cases of wasting of the optic nerve which could hardly be referred to any other cause than excessive smoking. In America and in France, we have rarely, indeed, met with them. In fact, many good surgeons in America are in doubt as to the existence of a genuine "tobacco amaurosis." Granting, however, that the English cases are real, I can only account for the scarcity of the affection elsewhere in one of two ways: first, by the difference in the character of the tobacco; second, by the influence of race. Those in England who are affected belong almost without exception to the lower classes, are, as a rule, drinkers as well as smokers, and smoke large quantities of the strongest tobacco manufactured, generally that known as "shag." It is a curious fact worthy of mention that those who chew are seldom, if ever, affected from this cause. The average American, we feel safe in saying, may use tobacco (of native growth) in moderation, with but little danger of detriment to his eyes. But it must also be remarked that what is moderation in one may amount to excess in another, and each one should find what is the limit of moderation in his individual case, and keep within it.

The attention of the profession is being more and more directed to the proper correction of faulty optical conditions of the eyes in childhood as a means of avoiding some of the actual deformities and diseases to which they are liable to lead in later life. It is not so generally known as it should be that squint or "cross eyes" is nearly always dependent upon a faulty construction of the ball, which is remediable by means of properly adapted glasses. Professor Donders, of Utrecht, Holland, has incurred the gratitude of thousands who, by this discovery, have been enabled to preserve their eyes straight and use them with comfort without having to undergo the ter-

rors of an operation. As, however, this application of glasses, in order to be thoroughly effective, must be made very early in life, some observations as to the signs and symptoms which point to such conditions are eminently appropriate here.

In the first place, it must be remarked that there are two kinds of squint—the inward and the outward, which depend, with rare exceptions, on two opposite optical defects. The inward squint is associated, in by far the greater majority of cases, with far-sightedness, the outward with short-sightedness.

Let us consider the inward form first. It may be observed, in passing, that many of the commonly accepted theories regarding the causation of this variety, as well as of the outward form, are without any foundation in fact. You hear frequently of children who, it is presumed, have acquired a squint by imitation from playmates who are thus affected. The absurdity of this is apparent at once when we reflect that any act to be imitated must be voluntary and under the command of the will. Any reader can convince himself that the act of squinting is not voluntary by attempting to produce it at will. You hear of others who, when quite young, kept their hair down over their eyes, and, in peering out from under it, acquired a “cast”; and there are various other ways in which the anomaly is supposed or believed to be produced. None of these circumstances have any influence in producing the deviation of the eyes. All those cases of inward “cast,” with only here and there an exception, when examined will be found to be far-sighted. When, therefore, at however early an age, the child is observed to have a periodical “cast,” it should forthwith be taken to a competent oculist for an examination as to far-sightedness. And if we could, in every case, as soon as the fact of far-sightedness is established, adapt to the eyes the glasses that completely correct the fault, and put them on a par with children with perfectly normal eyes, it would not be asserting too much to say that we should seldom have to resort to the operation of dividing the tendon of the internal straight muscle of the eye, which is the only cure for a confirmed squint. But

unfortunately we cannot, in the majority of cases, do this. Even in children of eight and ten years there is often great difficulty in having the glasses constantly worn. They are thoughtless and careless, and in play the glasses get knocked off and become broken; and frequently the somewhat odd appearance of a child in spectacles makes it the subject of jest, and the glasses are purposely laid aside as soon as it is away from the eye of the parents or guardians. In all cases, however, the effort should be made.

The symptoms which attend far-sightedness are distinct and marked. After a more or less prolonged use of the eyes, particularly by bad or artificial light, there is a complaint of pain,—not so much in the eyes as around them, and especially across the forehead. If the use of the eyes is still persisted in, the letters become so blurred and indistinct that the book must be laid aside. After a few moments' rest it can be resumed, but with ultimately the same result. It is most frequently at this time of fatigue that we see the first tendency to squint. If one eye is allowed to turn inward, the strain is somewhat relieved, and the work can be proceeded with in a measure of comfort. It is wonderful what a complete relief to all these unpleasant symptoms the application of proper glasses brings. It is a law, from which there should be no variation, that a far-sighted child should never be allowed to use its eyes for near work without its glasses.

Outward squint, or more frequently the tendency to outward squint associated with a weakness of the internal straight muscles, is, in a large proportion of cases, connected with short-sightedness. This connection is not so common, perhaps, as the connection of inward squint with far-sightedness, but it is so generally the case that when an outward "cast" is observed the eyes should be examined with reference to short-sightedness and the relative power of the different muscles which move the eyes.

A weakness of one set of muscles (most frequently the straight muscles that move the eyes inward) is the cause of a great number of cases of painful vision, and, being in a large

proportion of instances associated with, and dependent upon, the short-sighted condition of the eyes, is remediable by means of properly fitted concave glasses, associated sometimes with prisms. It is evident, then, how important it is to have the eyes examined upon the first appearance of symptoms pointing to this condition.

The symptoms that characterize this weakness have something of the same nature as those which are present in far-sightedness. The principal features in both are pain and confusion of sight. The pain in the former, however, differs from that in far-sightedness in the fact that it is felt more in the eye itself, though it may radiate from it to the surrounding parts; and the confusion of sight consists not so much in a blurring of the object as an overlapping of two images. This latter feature may attain such a degree as actually to cause double vision. When this is the case, it is impossible to use the two eyes at once and have satisfactory vision, so the one eye is allowed to deviate far outward, so as not to participate in "direct" vision at all, and the work is carried on with the other eye alone.

But the most important question in connection with short-sightedness is that of its progressive increase under improper use of the eyes, and of its production in healthy eyes under certain unfavorable surroundings. The notice of the profession has been called to these points only within comparatively recent years, and a knowledge of the facts that have thus far been accumulated should have a wider dissemination than can be obtained through the purely scientific and professional journals, since it is a matter holding an important interest for our educators, and all those having the care and training of children. For this reason we shall give the subject a consideration somewhat in detail.

Accurate and complete examinations of the eyes of school-children of all grades have been made on an extensive scale in several cities of Europe, with especial reference to this matter. The number of children whose eyes have been thus carefully examined amounts now to several thousands, and statistics



based on them are as reliable as statistics can be made. Some such examinations have been made in this country, notably by Dr. C. R. Agnew, of New York, and Dr. Hasket Derby, of Boston; but they are not so complete as those we have from Germany and Switzerland.

The deductions from all these separate and independent observations have been wonderfully unanimous in their character. They show that, while in young children who are just beginning to use their eyes for near work, the percentage of short-sightedness is very low,—in fact, the opposite condition of far-sightedness tending to prevail,—in the more advanced classes the percentage increases with the grade of the class, and finally exceeds that of any other condition. One investigator gives the percentages as follows: From the seventh to the twelfth year the short-sightedness increases at the rate of one per cent. a year; from the twelfth to the fourteenth, at the rate of four and a half per cent. per year; while from the fourteenth to the eighteenth the percentage amounts to from fourteen and a half per cent. to fifty-five per cent.

It will be thus seen that in direct proportion as the eyes are used for close work is the myopic condition increased. Such a state of affairs would be alarming could we not at the same time demonstrate a causal relation between the faulty hygienic surroundings in these cases and the large percentage of short-sightedness. It would indeed be a terrible thing if we could attain culture only through risk of a curtailment of the most important sense of which we are possessed. For we must bear in mind that—quite contrary to current opinion—the short-sighted eye is essentially a diseased eye, and should always be considered and treated as such. Some of the most melancholy afflictions to which the eye is liable often follow as the natural results of the myopic condition. It is true that short-sighted persons are generally able to dispense with glasses for reading and other near work, even to an advanced old age; but for seeing objects distinctly at a distance other kinds of glasses are absolutely necessary, the inconvenience of using which is quite as great as of using glasses for near

work. We should have, then, everything to gain by reducing the prevalence of myopia.

The extensive statistics to which we have alluded have shown us another important fact worthy of consideration, and that is that, under these pernicious influences, it is not those eyes alone which are hereditarily predisposed to short-sightedness that pass into that condition, but that normal eyes in which no such predisposition can be traced, and even far-sighted eyes, become short-sighted, if subjected sufficiently long to such injurious agencies.

It has long been a fact widely known that myopia affects by preference those who use their eyes constantly for near work. And especially is it prevalent among the educated and cultivated classes who employ their eyes during a large portion of the day (and night, too) in reading or writing; short-sightedness is almost unknown among the uncivilized inhabitants of the globe. Watch-makers, jewelers, and some others whose business requires a close application of the eyes, form an apparent exception to this rule, since the percentage of short-sightedness in them is not great. The exception, however, is only apparent. They always have a good light; seldom work by artificial light, and nearly always use in their very fine work an eyeglass, which removes pretty much all the strain from the eye; and the investigations of recent years go to show that the most frequent cause of myopia lies not so much in the continued use of the eyes as in the unfavorable circumstances attending upon their use, and in particular as regards illumination.

In order to an appreciative understanding of the manner in which these causes tend to the production of myopia, a brief explanation of the condition of the eye in short-sightedness is necessary. A myopic state of the eye may depend upon one of two conditions: first, its refracting surfaces may be too strongly curved; or, secondly, the retina may be too far removed from these surfaces—in other words, the eye may be too long. Either of these conditions will have the effect to allow a distinct image of an object to be formed on the retina

only when the object is situated within a comparatively short distance of the eyes. The images of all objects farther removed will be indistinct, because the retina is no longer in the focus of rays of light coming from them. Now, the first of these conditions (the excessive curvature of the refracting surfaces) is rare, and, when present, is generally congenital. The second condition, though, beyond doubt, sometimes congenital, is not commonly so, but is developed in after life, and, in accordance with statistics, the percentage of its increase is in direct proportion to the continuous use of the eyes under unfavorable circumstances.

The manner in which these circumstances bring about a change in the shape of the ball is the following :

Given a bad light, fine work, or work placed in such a position as requires a bent position of the head and body, and let it be continued under these circumstances day after day, or night after night, and the result sooner or later must be a congested condition of the eyes, and especially, it has been found, of the inner coats of the back part of the ball. This congestion, if kept up for any considerable length of time, leads to a softening of the tissues at that point, and eventually to a lengthening of the ball through a giving way of the parts to the lateral pressure of the muscles which move the eye.

Such is the now accepted theory ; but, whether satisfactorily explanatory in all particulars or not, the fact yet remains which cannot be disputed that there is a causative relation existing between such circumstances and the production and increase of the degree of short-sightedness. This being so clearly demonstrated, the course to pursue in order to prevent any increase of existing myopia, and even its production *de novo*, is plain, and this is the point to which we would call the earnest attention of our educators.

The question of first importance is necessarily that of light. And this is just where almost every school-room that has been examined has been found wanting.

The quantity of light, in the first place, is rarely sufficient. It has been determined that the proportion which should exist



between the amount of glass surface (in square feet) and the square surface of the floor is as one to three and five-tenths, or at least one to four. In other words, for a room twenty feet square there should be from seventy to eighty square feet of glass, which amounts to between five hundred and six hundred square inches for each scholar, should twenty scholars occupy it. In many of the rooms examined the proportion amounted to from one and one-tenth to one and fourteen one-hundredths. With insufficient light it is no wonder that eyes having an inherent tendency to short-sightedness should give way. Let, then, the directors of institutions of whatever kind where the eyes—and particularly the eyes of children—are required to do close work, see that the square surface of the windows to the square surface of the floor does not fall below the proportion of one to four.

But even when there is the proper amount of light, it is highly important that it be rightly managed. In the majority of rooms examined, the arrangement of the light was exceedingly bad. In a large number, what light there was came from in front, and of course fell directly in the faces of the children. The ill effects of this are not confined alone to the eyes, but extend to other portions of the body. In order to avoid the glare of the light, the children either bend the body strongly forward so as to shade the eyes by the head, or else they twist it around so that the light shall fall directly upon the page. Both of these positions exert a pernicious influence upon the physical structure of the growing organism. There is great danger of the chest becoming narrow and contracted, and of the spine becoming curved. Many of the cases of spinal curvature and contracted chests can be traced to these unnatural positions while at school.

Without considering further what ought not to be the position of the light, we will say that the desks in the school-room (and the same rules apply to all occupations where the eyes are used regularly for near work) should be so arranged that the light shall come from the left and slightly from above. The windows should, therefore, be high, and, if shaded at all,



the shading should cover the lower rather than the higher portion. In many instances it may not be possible to use the light from the left, and in that case the next best is that from the right. In this latter case, however, the shadows cast by the hand and arm generally fall in inconvenient positions.

But even with the most satisfactory management of the light, the arrangement of the seats and desks may be such as to bring about the same class of troubles, both as to the eyes and body. The desks may be too low, requiring a bent position of the body in writing, etc., or the distance between the seat and desk may be too great, necessitating a bending forward of the body, thus depriving the back of its proper support against the back of the seat. In order to avoid this, and all the other ills which such circumstances entail, the desks should be of such a height that the elbows may rest upon them, when the body is erect, without any displacement of the shoulders. The seat should be broad enough to support the whole length of the thigh, and high enough to allow the feet to rest comfortably upon the floor. The back should be straight, though not high, and the loins should rest against it. The distance between the edge of the desk and the back of the seat should be such as to allow the body to move comfortably in the space, but not so great as to permit a bending forward of the body in writing or in doing other work lying on the desk. The top of the desk should have a slant of about twenty degrees for writing, and forty degrees for reading. If it is flat, the foreshortening of the letters mars in no inconsiderable degree their distinctness. A slant of forty degrees would be best for writing, also, but the ink would not flow from the pen so freely at that inclination. The lid of the desk can be made, by a simple arrangement, to assume any inclination desired, and all desks should be manufactured with that end in view.

But when we have attended to all these matters, it is necessary still, if the child is short-sighted, to put its eyes in such a condition optically as will allow work to be done at a distance of from twelve to eighteen inches (thirty to forty-five

centimeters). If the short-sightedness is of such a low degree that it does not require a glass of higher power than a No. 20 for its correction, glasses may be dispensed with for near work, but when the myopia exceeds that, glasses should always be worn. The best authorities we have on this subject insist on a *complete correction of the myopia of children by glasses, which should be constantly worn and made a part of the refracting apparatus of the eye.* If this is done sufficiently early, the eyes are then placed in the same condition as normal eyes, and with the care which we have insisted upon in preceding paragraphs, there is but little danger of an increase of the degree of the short-sightedness. If, however, this is not done, and especially if the hygienic rules are not strictly complied with, the law is that there will be a progressive increase of the degree,—popular opinion to the contrary notwithstanding.

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### OUNCES OF PREVENTION.

THE class of mothers in America who read this are not likely to neglect the mental or moral training of their children; nor their bodies, either, so far as a fervid faith and energetic practice in some pet school of hygiene or medicine are concerned. But many mothers are apt to look upon any persistent attempt to develop the beauty or full physical power of different parts of the body as mere vanity and pandering to the pride of the flesh. Every sensible mother should recognize the fact that God gave the organs of sense, with color, shape, and beauty to her child, just as well as a stomach and liver, and it is as much her duty to preserve in perfection the one gift as the other, while the child is in her charge.

*Eyes.*—The eyes are, perhaps, the most important and most neglected member of the body. Weak vision and strabismus result, in the majority of instances, from the habit of giving

infants into the care of ignorant nurses to drag through the sunny streets in light-covered wagonets, the tops of which reflect the glare into the luckless victims' eyes. The eyes of a child under a year old should not be allowed to meet the blaze of unshaded sunlight; and children of advanced age should be taught to protect their eyes by resting them when practicable on softly toned colors, as, for instance, on the green of the landscape, instead of the red clay at the side of the railway. A child can be taught thus to care for the health of his eyes until it becomes an unconscious habit. The walls, carpet, etc., of the child's sleeping and school rooms should be of solid, not mixed, colors—as grays, fawn, or green. Any indication of defective vision, whether of near-sightedness or more serious difficulty, should be referred to an oculist as early as possible, and glasses provided under his direction. There is frequently a difference in the convexity of the lenses of the eyes, for which glasses must be made of different power for each. If the parents are ignorant of this fact, the child's weaker eye gradually gives up the effort to accommodate itself to the other, and becomes absolutely useless before middle age.

*Teeth.*—The quality of the teeth is in a great degree hereditary, but can be materially improved by attention to the food of the child during the first and second periods of dentition. Oatmeal, limestone water, strict prohibition of what is significantly called “slop diet,” may prevent all the future misery which belong to aching teeth, dentists, and bad digestion.

*Hair.*—Even the highest authority sets down long hair as one of the glories of a woman. Yet while mothers are usually willing to buy their daughters pounds of switches, finger-puffs, and curls from the heads of other women, they take no pains to keep the hair which Nature gave her. If the hair be of coarse texture, it should not be cut short in childhood, as cutting both darkens and coarsens it. If thin and fine, as is usual with women of blonde organization, it should be cut close to the head in every case. No tonic or restorative should be used to insure a healthy growth of hair; all that is needed being to

keep the scalp wholly free from any rheum or dust, and to excite the surface by frequent and prolonged brushing; this should be done by bathing the whole head in pure cold water (sea or salt water) two or three times a week, and by thorough drying and brushing until the softness and oiliness return to the hair. Successful hair restoratives are simply mild tonics, whose success depends on the friction of the scalp in applying them. The hair of a girl should never be artificially curled, crimped, or otherwise maltreated. A silken snood or ribbon is the most artistic and healthful treatment for it.

It is folly to underrate the value of grace and ease of bearing. Some of our wisest men and most earnest women lose their effect in society by a slouching, uneasy manner, which annoys their companions and even themselves. It is greatly the fault of the mother if the child's body does not furnish a fit expression to noble thoughts within. First, let her enable it to move freely on broad, well-fitting, heelless shoes; secondly, let her give it inherent vigor and grace of motion by plenty of exercise in the open air, and by training her to womanly and courteous habits of thought. A girl who is unselfish, modest, and gentle in mind is not apt to be awkward or coarse in bearing.

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### *SENSE IN SHOES.*

EVERYBODY has heard the old story of how Canova chose five hundred beautiful women from whom to model his Venus, and among them all could not find a decent set of toes. If he lived nowadays, what luck would he have under the dainty little laced bootees, with their high-pointed heels? As for these adult women, however, if they choose to both torture and disfigure themselves, we have neither advice nor sympathy to offer; but the condition of the feet of the children is really too serious a matter to be passed by in silence. As soon as the



helpless baby can put its foot to the ground, and before it can complain in words, shoes are put on it, by which the width of the toes is contracted fully half an inch, and usually a stiff counter is ordered in the heel with some vague idea of "strengthening the ankle." From that time, no matter how watchful or sensible its parents may be in other regards, this instrument of torture always constitutes part of its dress; the toes are forced into a narrower space year by year, "to give a good shape to the foot," until they overlap and knot, and knob themselves over with incipient corns and bunions; then the heel is lifted from the ground by artificial means,—thus the action of the calf-muscles is hindered and the elastic cartilage of the whole foot stiffened at their earliest tender period of growth. The results are a total lack of elasticity in the step and carriage (American women are noted for their mincing, cramped walk), and a foot inevitably distorted and diseased. We need not go to the statues of ancient Greece to find of what beauty the foot is susceptible when left to its natural development; our own Indian can show us. We have seen the foot of an old chief, who had tramped over the mountains for sixty years, which for delicacy of outline and elasticity could shame that of the fairest belle. Southern children are more fortunate in this matter than those in the North, as it is customary, even in the wealthiest classes, to allow their feet to remain bare until the age of six. Mothers in the North are not wholly to blame, however, as the climate requires that the feet shall be covered, and it is well-nigh impossible, even in New York, to find shoes properly made for children unless a last is especially ordered for the foot. As a new last would be required every month or two, very few parents are able to give the watchfulness and money required. If shoes of the proper shape were insisted upon by customers, the dealers would speedily furnish them. Nothing is more prompt than the reply of trade to any hint of a new want or fashion. A shoe-maker in one of the inland cities made a fortune by advertising shoes of the shape of a child's foot. He counted on the intelligence and good sense of the mothers, and was not disappointed. If the

mothers would insist upon such work from their shoe-makers, their children would arise upon well-shaped, healthy feet to call them blessed.

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### *OLD EYES AND SPECTACLES.*

NUMEROUS errors respecting the condition of eyes that have become affected with age, and concerning the use of spectacles, are prevalent, not only among the laity, but also among the mass of medical practitioners themselves. This, however, is not to be wondered at, since the more precise physiological knowledge of the parts of the visual apparatus involved has come to us within comparatively recent years, and only those who have been working in that particular line have kept pace with the advance of that knowledge. Eyes that have become affected through age were formerly, and are now by a large number, incorrectly regarded as being in the same condition as far-sighted eyes. Persons of all ages may be far-sighted, but presbyopia—or old eyes—is limited to those who have reached the meridian of life and are traveling the downward slope. Far-sightedness, or hypermetropia, is dependent upon a faulty construction of the eye-ball—in general, it is an eye that is too short: while presbyopia is simply the result of the decline of the powers from age.

Presbyopia consists essentially in an inability to see distinctly small objects close at hand. Our ability to distinguish fine objects within a few inches of the eyes is due to the fact that we have the power to increase the curvature of the crystalline lens, and thus to unite the rays, which come in a divergent manner from those objects, upon the retina. Two factors enter into the production of this; first, the plasticity of the lens, and second, the contraction of a muscle acting upon it. Both of these factors undergo modification with age; the lens becomes firmer and less plastic, and the muscle gets stiff and less active.

Now, while these changes have in reality been going forward since childhood, they do not, under ordinary circumstances, make themselves appreciably felt until about the fortieth year. (We speak now of eyes that are in other respects healthy.) At about that age,—or between that and the fiftieth year,—most individuals experience difficulty in recognizing small objects, especially under bad illumination. In the evening, the book or newspaper is laid aside earlier than formerly, and casual remarks are made not complimentary to the printers of this generation. The page is instinctively held at a greater distance from the eyes, and turned so as to have the light fall upon it most advantageously. This sort of thing growing from bad to worse, you happen incidentally to mention it to an elder friend, who astonishes you perhaps by saying: "My dear fellow, you need glasses." The fact is now forced upon you, for the first time it may be, that you are growing old! But it is the course of Nature, and you must accept the fiat. She now declares that she is no longer able of herself to do her work properly, and that art must lend its aid.

And just here comes in a very generally accepted error. It is currently believed that the use of glasses should be put off as long as possible; that a too early use of them is injurious, and that when once begun it becomes, earlier than it should be, a necessity. As the office of the glass is to supply the refracting power which the eye, through age, can no longer furnish, it is evident that so soon as a need of this artificial power is felt we should resort to it. By failing to do so we deprive ourselves of much useful work of the organ, while the work it does is done under a disadvantage and with greater or less risk.

"But how shall I know when I need them?" you may ask. When you can no longer read with ease the finest print of your newspaper at a distance of thirty centimeters (twelve inches).

Inconvenience will first be felt in the use of the eyes in the evening, and for a year or more you may confine the use of

your glasses to work at that time. But soon they will become necessary during the day, especially if you have work requiring close and accurate attention, and the light is not good.

Under ordinary circumstances, and when the eyes are in other respects healthy, the first glasses should be weak—say about No. 60, according to the numbering in this country. Such a number, however, should be selected as will enable you to read the finest print at thirty centimeters (twelve inches). After the lapse of a year or two, you will find it necessary to increase the number of your glasses to about forty-eight, and you will find that these will serve both for evening and day work. As regards the frequency with which the glasses have to be changed, it differs in different individuals. As a general rule, however, they should be increased as much as the individual case may demand every five or seven years—always keeping the “near point” of good, clear vision at about twelve inches. The general health will influence this largely, the weak, nervous woman feeling the need of an increase in the strength of her glasses much sooner than a robust, healthy man. Those who use their eyes much, especially if at trying work, will also experience a demand for a more frequent change.

These rules apply, as previously mentioned, to eyes in a perfectly normal condition. Short-sightedness and far-sightedness influence the necessity for glasses to a great degree. Short-sighted persons can dispense with glasses for near work for a much longer time than those having normal eyes, and if their short-sightedness is of even a moderate degree, they may live to a ripe old age without ever having occasion to use them. On the other hand, far-sighted persons feel the need of assistance very early—often as early as the twenty-fifth or thirtieth year.

A few words now as to the glasses themselves. In the first place, bear in mind that “pebble” glasses are somewhat of a humbug. Even if they are what they are represented to be, and are made of pure crystal, they can serve no better purpose than if made of good clear glass. They are harder than







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ordinary glass, and thus less liable to be scratched, but that virtue is hardly an equivalent for the several extra dollars which the optician demands for his "superior pebbles," which, among other recommendations, are "warranted to strengthen the eyes by use." A pair of spectacles of clear glass, free from defects and accurately ground, which in a neat steel frame cost about three dollars or less, will do as much as the pebbles, for which ten dollars, and even more, are asked.

When in use, the glasses should sit square in front of the eyes and at a distance of about one inch from them, and the centers of the lenses should correspond to the centers of the pupils, or a little to the inside, never to the outer, when the eyes are looking straight forward.

The cases in which the glasses are held, when not in use, ought to open along the side, so that they can be laid in, and not open at one end, which necessitates their being pushed in and pulled out. The rubbing of the lenses against the sides of the case soon causes a depolishing of their most permanent part (the center), and of course materially mars their transparency.

For cleansing the lenses, use a piece of old, soft, cotton cloth. Silk, linen, and paper are all liable to scratch the glass.

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### *HOW TO CARE FOR THE SICK.*

BY almost all the civilized world, the name of Florence Nightingale is spoken with love and admiration. Any suggestions upon the care of the sick cannot begin better than by her story, which always brings to every one who hears it a thrill of longing to do something great and good for suffering humanity.

Many girls think that all they lack is the opportunity, and if they only had the chance, they could win the love and

reverence of thousands of their fellow-beings just as she did; but no one can start out of an aimless, useless life into a heroic one. The beginning of the path of glory is narrow and difficult, and often very dull.

Florence Nightingale had been nursing, among the poor tenants on her father's estate, for many years before the Crimean war began; so that she was all ready for the opportunity when it came. When, in that fearful time, soldiers were dying by thousands for want of proper care, England, at last, was aroused to a sense of her own responsibility in the matter, and it was decided to send nurses. Mr. Herbert, the Secretary of War, who had charge of the expedition, knew that he could never send a band of women to that foreign land to care for the soldiers, unless some one woman could be found who understood the whole matter, and could take charge of the entire company. There was no time to train a person for this position. She must be found, all ready for the work. He remembered that, in Derbyshire, there was a woman who had been working among the poor in their own homes, and had visited hospitals and studied the art of nursing for years. Who could doubt that she would undertake the great charge of carrying help and comfort to the dying soldiers? He wrote and asked her, and his letter crossed, on its way, one from her, offering her services as an army nurse. So this company of brave women started, with Miss Nightingale at their head. When they reached the seat of war, they found such sickness and suffering as they had never dreamed of finding. No "Sanitary Commission" had poured in boxes of supplies, as in our late war. The hospitals were dirty and comfortless, and, even when food was abundant, the men often suffered, because there was no one whose business it was to see that it was given to them. An order had to pass through so many different officers, that the men might die before they could get what they needed. On one occasion, soon after the nurses arrived, the sick were suffering for the want of something which was locked up among the stores from England. No one could get it until the proper officer came. "I must



have it now," said Miss Nightingale. "You cannot, until you have a proper permit," said the guard. She said no more, but simply called some Turks to help her, and went straight to the building where the stores were kept. "Knock the door down," said this resolute woman; and down went the door. She took what was needed, and went back to the hospital. After that, the officers knew that, though most scrupulous in obeying necessary orders, she was not one who would sit still and let men die, while waiting until a regular form had been gone through.

You all know the story of how the soldiers loved her, "the lady with the lamp," and how they turned to kiss her shadow, as it fell upon their pillows; and how, when she came back to England, she met the gratitude of the nation—the Queen herself sending her a beautiful locket, blazing with gems, with "Blessed are the merciful" upon it, and, underneath, the word "Crimea." Her countrymen desired to offer her some testimonial of their gratitude, and a fund was raised for that purpose, but Florence Nightingale declined any personal reward for her labors, and the money was devoted to the founding of an institution for training nurses.

One heroine is sure to make others. When our war came, hundreds of women, remembering what she had done, were ready to give their time and strength to the work of nursing the sick and wounded. Day and night they toiled, and it was not all bathing aching heads, nor reading aloud and writing letters for the soldiers; there were dreadful wounds to be dressed, and tiresome rubbings, and wearisome watchings. But they learned that the most distasteful details may be endured, if one only has unselfishness and courage. It is to be hoped that none of our young readers will ever be needed as army nurses; but it is almost certain that every one of the girls, and many of the boys, will have to care for the sick many times in the course of their lives, either in their own homes or in the homes of others; and unless they know how to do it in the best and easiest way,—for the best is always really the easiest,—they may do more harm than good. The

best intentions and kindest feelings, in order to be successful, must be intelligently applied. Experience is, of course, the best teacher, but it is not pleasant for sick people to be experimented upon, and mistakes or omissions in such matters are sometimes fatal; so perhaps a few simple directions may be the next best thing to experience.

In the first place, remember that, in cases of severe illness, a friend's life may depend upon care and watchfulness on your part, and that the duties of the sick-room are made up of a great variety of little things, which may seem trivial, but which are really *very* important.

Keep the air of the room fresh and pure *always*, and do not try to do it by opening the door now and then. It was one of Miss Nightingale's rules that "windows are made to be open—doors are made to be shut." *Pure* air must come from outside. Do not be afraid to open the window unless the physician has forbidden it, but be sure that you do not cool the air too much in trying to freshen it. There is no essential connection between *cold* air and *pure* air. In admitting fresh air, be very careful that it cannot blow directly upon the invalid. A shawl spread across two high-backed chairs will take the place of a screen in keeping off the draught.

Keep everything about the patient as sweet and clean as possible. Have the room neat, and pleasant, and orderly. A row of sticky bottles, with two or three spoons in which medicine has been measured, a bowl from which gruel has been served, an untidy grate, a littered floor or table, will make any sick person feel discouraged. A few flowers by the bedside, a constant supply of fresh, cool water, bed-clothes frequently smoothed and pillow changed, the light carefully shaded from the weak eyes,—attention to little things like these will make a great difference in the comfort and spirits of the sick person.

Write down all that the physician tells you before you forget it, and pin the paper where you can consult it easily; and look at it frequently, that you may not let the time for giving medicine slip by without knowing it. This will save you the trouble of remembering everything, and if some one comes to take your place, you will not have to repeat the directions.

Do not wait until sick people ask for what they want, but try to anticipate their wishes. Some people, with the kindest intentions, annoy by constantly asking the sick if they do not wish this and that, and how they feel, and other similar questions, until they are quite worn out by answering, and are tempted to give the ungracious reply that all they want is to be let alone.

In sickness, people are sensitive to small annoyances which can hardly be appreciated by a person in health. The crackling of a newspaper, or the rustle of a silk dress, may become a source of serious discomfort to them. Learn to avoid all unnecessary noise, but remember that there is a sort of *laborious quiet*, more annoying still. Walking about on tiptoe, or whispering, is sure to disturb a nervous person more than an ordinary step or tone. If the fire needs replenishing, it can be done very quietly by having the coal in paper bags, which can be laid on with no noise at all. If you are careful, every time you leave the room, to remember to take something with you which is to go down-stairs, and, when you come back, to bring something which you need, you will save yourself many steps, and the invalid the annoyance of hearing you go out and in five or six times, when once would have done as well.

Ask the physician what food a sick person may have, and be careful to follow his directions in this, as in everything else, *exactly*. Whatever you take to the invalid, make it look as attractive as possible. Do not take too much of anything, as a small quantity is much more likely to tempt the appetite. Spread a clean napkin over your salver, and if you have nothing more to offer than a toasted cracker and a cup of tea, let everything be good of the kind, and neatly served. A slop of tea in the saucer, a burnt side to the cracker, a sticky spoon, may spoil what might have seemed an attractive breakfast. If the invalid can sit up in a chair to eat, so much the better; but if not, spread a large napkin or towel over the sheet, that it may not become disfigured by drops spilled upon it. Have something always at hand to throw over the shoulders while sitting up in bed, and see that the pillows are so arranged as to afford a comfortable support for the back.

If you can procure some little delicacy, it will taste much better if it comes as a surprise than it will if you have been foolish enough to mention it beforehand. Food should never be spoken of in a sick-room, unless it is absolutely necessary.

If you read aloud, be sure to read distinctly, and not too long at a time, because sick people are easily tired. This must be remembered when callers are admitted. When they ask leave to come in, you must say, frankly, that your charge can only bear short visits; and when you yourself are calling on invalids, remember that time seems longer to them than it does to you. Last of all, but by no means least, talk only of pleasant things. The baby's last funny speech, the good fortune of your friend, the pleasant letter bringing good news from a far country, the amusing anecdote, the entertaining book,—never of the worries, and pain, and care which come to your knowledge. Sick people do not need to hear of others' misfortunes. They know enough of their own. Whatever of weariness or anxiety you may feel, never betray it by word or look, and do not let them feel that the time which you devote to them is given grudgingly. I have said nothing of kindness, and forbearance, and patience, and good temper; but all these graces will be needed, since invalids often are very provoking. Let all their little peevish ways give you a hint of something to avoid when your time of sickness comes, and you are ministered to by others.

These few suggestions, of course, do not exhaust the subject. They may seem to you quite unnecessary, and only what ought to be familiar to every one; but they are not always acted upon, as many sufferers can testify.

Dr. Holmes, who knows something, from education, observation, and experience, about a sick-room, says that

“Simple kindness kneeling by the bed  
To shift the pillow for the sick man's head,  
Give the fresh draught to cool the lips that burn,  
Fan the hot brow, the weary frame to turn,  
Wins back more sufferers, with her voice and smile,  
Than all the trumpery in the druggist's pile.”



## SHORT HINTS CONCERNING SICKNESS.

WHEN the doctor comes to see you, remember how many pairs of stairs he has to climb every day, and go down to him if you are well enough.

Remember that sick people are not necessarily idiotic or imbecile, and that it is not always wise to try to persuade them that their sufferings are imaginary. They may even at times know best what they need.

Of course, a nurse "should have a cheerful disposition." The veriest tyro that ever entered a sick-room has been well drilled in this lesson. But it is a delusion to suppose that an everlasting *smirk* is required. Once, long ago, in that dim and far-off war time, an irritated soldier expressed his mind on this subject in a way which caused an irrepressible and sympathizing laugh throughout the ward, though it contained the most dangerous cases, just "down from the front."

"Ef yer don't stop that *etarnal grin* o' yourn, ye 'll make me shiver me other leg off afore mornin', ye ole chessy-cat!"

Yet the poor attendant had only been trying to obey the injunction of the surgeons, and "always carry a cheerful face."

Do not imagine that your duty is over when you have nursed your patient through his illness, and he is about the house, or perhaps going out again. Strength does not come back in a moment, and the days when little things worry and little efforts exhaust, when the cares of business begin to press, but the feeble brain and hand refuse to think and execute, are the most trying to the sick one, and then comes the need for your tenderest care, your most unobtrusive watchfulness.

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*DOMESTIC NURSING.*

SOME women possess naturally the light foot, deft hand, watchful eye, and quick apprehension that are essential to the good nurse. Yet there are comparatively few who know by intuition exactly what it is best to do and to leave undone in a sick-room. In cases of severe or prolonged illness it is generally possible, at least in large cities, to procure the services of a trained nurse. But frequently, from straitened means or other causes, this is out of the question, and then the care of the sufferer devolves upon some one of the household, who may or may not be equal to the emergency. It is a responsibility bringing with it the terrible feeling of helplessness when a woman realizes that a life, for which perhaps she would gladly give her own, depends in part upon her for its preservation, and may be lost through her ignorance or inefficiency. Under such circumstances, any reliable advice must be welcome, and it is with the hope of being of use that these practical hints, the result of some experience in hospital nursing, are offered to those in need of them.

If there is a possibility of choice, a large, sunny room should be selected for the invalid; if without a carpet, so much the better. The importance of sunshine can scarcely be overestimated. Cases have been known of wounds, that had obstinately refused to heal, yielding to treatment after being exposed for a few hours every day to the direct action of the sun. It is a capital disinfectant, worth bushels of chloride of lime, and never should be excluded unless by the express orders of the physician.

The room should be kept thoroughly ventilated, and at a temperature not lower than 68° or higher than 70°. Florence Nightingale says the first canon of nursing is to keep the air a patient breathes as pure as the external air, without chilling him. In most modern houses, the upper sash of the windows lets down, and may be kept open a few inches. If there is the slightest draught, it may be prevented at a small expense by having a light wooden frame, similar to those on which mos-

quitto-netting is fastened, about eight inches in width, made to fit the upper part of the window. A single thickness of flannel must be tacked on each side of it.

If the patient is kept warm, air may be freely admitted without the least danger. Far more persons are killed by the want, than by an excess, of fresh air.

All merely ornamental drapery should be removed from the windows, as it only serves to exclude the air and to harbor dust. Useless articles of furniture should be taken from the room, and those allowed to remain arranged to occupy as small a space as possible.

If the nature of the disease is not known, or if it has been pronounced infectious, it is well to remove books, ornaments, and trinkets. They absorb infection, and, being difficult to disinfect, may communicate it to some one else long after the patient has recovered.

Feather-beds are happily almost obsolete in these enlightened days. Should there chance to be one in the house, it must on no account be put under the invalid. A common mattress, with a hair one over it, makes a much more comfortable and suitable bed. The lower sheet must be firmly tucked in under both mattresses, at the foot as well as the sides. It is an excellent plan to spread a piece of India rubber sheeting underneath it, to protect the bed. A sheet folded once, lengthwise, laid *across* the bed, with the upper edge just touching the pillows and the ends tightly tucked under the mattresses, will be found to add greatly to the patient's comfort. It does not wrinkle as a single sheet will, crumbs can readily be brushed off it, and it can be changed with more ease than a large one. It is best to fold the upper end of the spread under the blankets before turning down the top sheet, as it helps to keep them in place.

The bed linen should be changed at least once in three days; the blankets once a week, those that have been removed being hung in the open air for a few hours, then thoroughly aired in a warm room, and put away to replace those in use, which should be similarly treated.

Nothing is more easy to an experienced nurse, or more difficult to an inexperienced one, than to change the bed linen with a person in bed. Everything that will be required must be at hand, properly aired, before beginning. Move the patient as far as possible to one side of the bed, and remove all but one pillow. Untuck the lower sheet and cross sheet, and push them toward the middle of the bed. Have a sheet ready folded or rolled the long way, and lay it on the mattress, unfolding it enough to tuck it in at the side. Have the cross sheet prepared as described before, and roll it also, laying it over the under one and tucking it in, keeping the unused portion of both still rolled. Move the patient over to the side thus prepared for him. The soiled sheets can then be drawn away, the clean ones completely unrolled and tucked in on the other side. The coverings need not be removed while this is being done; they can be pulled out from the foot of the bedstead and kept wrapped around the patient. To change the upper sheet, take off the spread and lay the clean sheet *over* the blankets, securing the upper edge to the bed with a couple of pins; standing at the foot, draw out the blankets and soiled sheets, replace the former, and put on the spread. Lastly, change the pillow-cases.

In changing body linen, have the fresh garment aired and close at hand; let the arms be drawn out of the soiled one, slip the clean one quickly over the head, and by the same movement draw it down and remove the other at the feet.

In bathing a person in bed, or giving a sponge bath, as it is called, either for the purpose of cleanliness or to lower the temperature in fever, the chief point to be observed is not to uncover too large a surface at once. Pin a blanket around the shoulders, fastening it behind, and remove the night-dress under that. It is as well to have a blanket under the patient also. Put the hand beneath the blanket and sponge the skin, a small portion at a time, taking care not to have too much water in the sponge, and dry with a towel; proceeding thus until the whole body is washed. A woman's hair should be combed every day, if she is in any way able to bear the



fatigue, else it becomes so matted as to render it almost impossible to disentangle it. It should be parted at the back and plaited in two braids. If done in one, it forms a hard ridge, very uncomfortable to lie upon, while two can be drawn well to each side and kept quite out of the way. If, unfortunately, it has become tangled, a little sweet oil will loosen it and render it more easily combed. A coarse comb should be used, beginning to comb gently downward from a point near the ends of the hair, and gradually approaching the head at each successive movement, as this will remove the detached hairs without needless pulling.

The teeth should be washed with a small piece of clean rag, dipped in fresh, cool water.

The utmost care and attention should be paid to keeping the cross sheet free from crumbs and wrinkles, as these are a frequent cause of bed-sores. It should be brushed after every meal, and occasionally smoothed and straightened during the day. If the patient is perfectly helpless, he must not be allowed to lie too long in the same position. In every case, the prominent points of the body, as the lower part of back, shoulder-blades, heels, and elbows, where the weight principally rests when lying in bed, should be examined daily, and, if there is the least redness, bathed with alcohol, thoroughly dried, and dusted with powdered oxide of zinc. If these precautions have not been taken, and the skin is broken, the sore must immediately be relieved from pressure. This can easily be done by twisting a strip of cotton batting into a ring of the requisite size, winding around it a long, narrow piece of cotton to keep it in shape, and then so placing it that the abraded surface shall be held away from contact with the bedclothes or garments by the encircling cushion. The spot may then be dressed with ointment of oxide of zinc, or any healing salve. It should still be washed every morning.

The utmost neatness and cleanliness must be observed in a sick-room. If, unfortunately, there is a carpet, it should be lightly brushed once a day, the broom being wetted to prevent the dust from rising in the air. The furniture and wood-work

should be wiped with a damp cloth. It is worse than useless to use a dry duster or feather-brush, as the dust is then merely transferred from one part of the room to another, instead of being removed, as it should be.

Every utensil should be taken out of the room as soon as used, and thoroughly cleansed before being brought back again. This may seem sometimes an unnecessary trouble ; but could one *see* the poisonous exhalations that are thus got rid of, one would not grudge the slight extra labor that is involved in disposing of them where they can do no harm. Every cup, glass, and spoon should be washed as speedily as possible.

There is no objection to there being a few plants in the room, so long as it is lighted ; they absorb carbonic acid and give off oxygen, and so assist in purifying the atmosphere. If cut-flowers are admitted, the water must be changed every day. A pinch of salt helps to keep it sweet, and is said to keep the flowers from fading. As soon as they begin to lose their freshness, they should be removed.

Should the patient be allowed to eat fruit, a few grapes or an orange, peeled and divided, may be kept on a plate placed over a bowl containing ice, the coolness imparted to the fruit making it more grateful to the palate. If cracked ice is given, as it is now in so many diseases, it may be necessary to prepare it in the sick-room, or at least within hearing of the patient. This can be done almost noiselessly by placing the lump of ice on a folded towel and using a long, stout pin to break off the pieces. If the point is pressed firmly on the ice near the edge of the block, fragments can be separated with ease.

Where there is nausea, very small quantities of food must be given at once, and that perfectly cold. A single tea-spoonful of milk or beef-tea, repeated in fifteen minutes, is more likely to be retained than two tea-spoonfuls taken together. The quantity may gradually be increased, until at length half a tea-cupful can be taken without difficulty.

When a person is too ill to sit up in bed, a glass or metal drinking-tube, such as can be procured at any apothecary's

shop, is invaluable for administering fluid nourishment and medicines. Should nothing better be at hand, a piece of small, flexible rubber tubing will answer the purpose, though glass is the most easily cleaned and the best in every way.

In cases of long illness, a small bed-table will be found indispensable to the comfort of the invalid. They may be bought of black walnut, or prettily finished in light and dark wood; but one that will answer every practical purpose can be made at home. A thin piece of board, fourteen by twenty-eight inches, forms the top, and strips of wood about five inches long, fastened securely at each corner, make the legs. When the head is raised with pillows, the table can be placed across the chest; anything put on it is brought within easy reach, and the sufferer can help himself to food with little exertion.

In preparing a meal for any one whose appetite is delicate, it should be made to look as tempting as possible. The tray should be covered with the whitest napkin, and the silver, glass, and china should shine with cleanliness. There should not be too great a variety of viands, and but a very small portion of each one. Nothing more quickly disgusts a feeble appetite than a quantity of food presented at one time.

The patient never should be consulted beforehand as to what he will eat or what he will drink. If he asks for anything, give it to him, with the doctor's permission; otherwise, prepare something he is known to like and offer it without previous comment. One of the chief offices of a good nurse is to think for her patient. His slightest want should be anticipated and gratified before he has had time to express it. Quick observation will enable her to detect the first symptom of worry or excitement and to remove the cause. An invalid never should be teased with the exertion of making a decision. Whether the room is too hot or too cold; whether chicken-broth, beef-tea, or gruel is best for his luncheon, and all similar matters, are questions which should be decided without appealing to him.

Household troubles should be kept as far as possible from the sick-room. Squabbles of children or servants never should find an echo there.

In the event of some calamity occurring, of which it is absolutely necessary the sufferer should be informed, the ill news should be broken as gently as possible, and every soothing device employed to help him to bear the shock.

Above all, an invalid, or even a person apparently convalescent, should be saved from his friends. One garrulous acquaintance admitted for half an hour will undo the good done by a week of tender nursing. Whoever is the responsible person in charge should know how much her patient can bear; she should keep a careful watch on visitors of whose discretion she is not certain, and the moment she perceives it to be necessary, politely but firmly dismiss them.

She must carry out implicitly the doctor's directions, particularly those regarding medicine and diet. Strict obedience to his orders, a faithful, diligent, painstaking following of his instructions, will insure to the sufferer the best results from his skill, and bring order, method, and regularity into domestic nursing.

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### *BLUNDERS IN THE SICK-ROOM.*

A MATTER often neglected in a sick-room, and yet very important, is the dress of the nurse. A patient is not likely to tell the affectionate relative "hovering around his bedside" that her dress is such an outrage on taste that it makes him melancholy to look at it. He tries to fix his gaze upon some other object,—even the medicine bottles are more lovely to his view,—but his eyes will wander back again to the horrible fascination of that costume. The dingy old dress that has been discarded and hung in the garret is not a proper one in which to robe oneself for the office of nurse. A short flannel sacque and felt skirt may be an economical costume,



but is not particularly charming. As for the dismal, poverty-stricken shawls with which ladies delight to array themselves in sick-rooms, one wonders where they came from. They are never seen or heard of at any other time. They appear and disappear mysteriously, like malevolent spirits. Some ladies have a fancy for tying up their heads at such times in faded veils, or handkerchiefs of fearful construction. People in health would not remain an hour in the presence of such a sight, but the helpless patient suffers in silence. The most suitable dress for the sick-room in winter is a dark, washable, woolen wrapper, not flowing loose, but belted in neatly at the waist, and finished at wrists and neck with narrow linen ruffling, and with a linen neck-tie. Tasteful white linen aprons are pretty and serviceable. At night, if necessary, throw around the shoulders a decent shawl. Even in summer, when calico wrappers are worn through the day, it will be found comfortable to change at night to the woolen fabric. Wear slippers or warm boots made of felt, or of any soft material that does not make a noise.

A want of sympathy on the part of a nurse is like a perpetual cold bath to a patient. This is not a very common blunder, but the opposite is so common that it may sometimes become a question in the patient's mind whether he would not prefer absolute coldness. To be continually dodging around the bed, and pouncing upon every object that is not at right angles, smoothing out the sheet, and dabbing at the pillows, and saying a dozen times an hour: "How do you feel *now*?" "Don't you want something to eat?" "Can I do anything for you?" "Let me bathe your head!"—is enough to drive a sick man wild. He feels that he would like to ask you to go away and hold your tongue; but he knows that all this fidgeting is prompted by affection, so he holds *his* tongue instead, and bears it all with what measure of patience nature has bestowed upon him. In point of fact, the sick person is generally very ready to tell his wants. His food, and drink, and physic are the momentous matters of the day to him, and will not be forgotten. He is likely to tell you when he feels better. He is sure to tell you when he feels worse.

Worse than all these things is the long, solemn face in the sick-room. It is hard for a troubled heart to put on a cheerful countenance, and it is no wonder that nurses so often fail in this. But we have known persons who thought that a cheerful face and a bright smile in a sick-room were indications of a hard heart.

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*SICK-ROOM PAPERS. No. 1.*

A SICK-ROOM should have a pleasant aspect. Light is essential. Blinds and curtains may be provided to screen the eyes too weak to bear full day, but what substitute makes up for the absence of that blessed sunshine without which life languishes? The walls should be of a cheerful tint; if possible, some sort of outdoor glimpse should be visible from the bed or chair where the invalid lies, if it is but the top of a tree and a bit of sky. Eyes which have been traveling for long, dull days over the pattern of the paper-hangings, till each bud and leaf and quirl is familiar—and hateful,—brighten with pleasure as a blind is raised. The mind, wearied of the grinding battle with pain and self, finds unconscious refreshment in the new interest. Ah, there is a bird's shadow flitting across the pane. The tree-top sways and trembles with soft rustlings—a white cloud floats dreamily over the blue,—and now, oh delight and wonder! the bird himself comes in sight and perches visibly on the bough, dressing his feathers and quivering forth a few notes of song. All the world, then, is not lying in bed because we are—is not tired of its surroundings—has not the back-ache! What a refreshing thought! And though this glimpse of another life—the fresh, natural life from which we are shut out—that life which has nothing to do with pills and potions, tiptoe movements, whispers, and doctor's boots creaking in the entry—may cause the hot tears to rush suddenly into our eyes, it

does us good, and we begin to say, with a certain tremulous thrill of hope: "When I go out again, I shall do" — so and so.

Ah, if nurses, if friends knew how irksome, how positively harmful, is the *sameness* of a sick-room, surely love and skill would devise remedies. If it were only bringing in a blue flower to-day and a pink one to-morrow; hanging a fresh picture to vary the monotony of the wall, or even an old one in a new place—something, anything—it is such infinite relief. Small things and single things suffice. To see many of his surroundings changed at once confuses an invalid; to have one little novelty at a time to vary the point of observation, stimulates and cheers. Give him that, and you do more and better than if you filled the apartment with fresh objects.

It is supposed by many that flowers should be carefully kept away from sick people,—that they exhaust the air or communicate to it some harmful quality. This may, in a degree, be true of such strong, fragrant blossoms as lilacs or garden lilies, but of the more delicately scented ones no such effect need be apprehended. A well-aired room will never be made close or unwholesome by a nosegay of roses, mignonette, or violets, and the subtle cheer which they bring with them is infinitely reviving to weary eyes and depressed spirits. Many a sigh has been changed to a smile by the fresh face of a rose looking over the edge of its glass. Many a heavy burden has shifted itself momentarily to the slender stem of fringed gentian or sweet-pea, and, best of all, when it returned, as return it must, to the long-accustomed shoulders, it was never exactly to the same spot or with the same pressure. For it is part of Nature's law of adjustment that relief, however temporary, produces a shifting and redistribution of pain, which in itself is helpful, and under the workings of this beautiful law, the little influences which break the heavy strain of bodily illness work far beyond their own value or knowledge in bringing about Nature's other law—the law of health.

*SICK-ROOM PAPERS. No. 2.*

## THE NURSE.

VENTURING on a few plain axioms which all nurses, however limited in scope and ambition, should accept and remember, we note the following:

Secure your patient's confidence. If he learns to doubt your memory or discretion, and feels obliged to keep the run of the medicines and the doctor's rules in his own head, so as to be able to remind *you*, he might as well have no nurse at all.

Watch his fancies. These "fancies" are often the most valuable indications of what will conduce to recovery. Not that they are always to be relied upon, still less indulged. But an observant nurse will discriminate and judge for herself.

Be quiet in movement and in voice. How a sick person learns to hate the fussy nurse, the loud nurse—the nurse that rustles! But "slowness is not gentleness, though it is often mistaken for such: quickness, lightness, and gentleness are quite compatible." It is not the absolute noise that harms a patient,—it is the strain on his attention and nerves. A long, whispered consultation in the room or passage just out of his hearing does him more injury than a drum in the street below his window.

Don't fidget. Don't weary the invalid with your mental processes. Irresolution is what sick persons most dread. People who "think outside their heads" should never be nurses.

Conciseness and decision, especially in little things, are necessary for the comfort of the sick—as necessary as the absence of hurry and bustle. A sick person should not be called upon to make up his mind more than once upon any matter. As well demand that he digest two dinners.

Divert. "A patient can just as much move his leg when it is fractured as change his thoughts when no external help from variety is given him." And this sameness is one of the main sufferings in sickness, just as the fixed posture is one of the main sufferings of the broken limb.



If you read aloud, don't drag and don't gabble. Above all, don't read bits out of some book which happens to interest yourself, in the vain hope of thereby entertaining your invalid. Few things create a more painful tension for weak nerves than this very common habit.

And lastly,—with all reverence be it spoken,—dismiss from your mind and speech the habit of laying upon “Providence” the blame which is due to human carelessness and human inefficiency. Providence—under the dearer and closer name of God—is with us in sickness as in health. But, to close with some of the best and bravest words spoken in our day: “He lays down certain physical laws. Upon His carrying out those laws depends our responsibility (that much-abused word), for how could we have responsibility for actions the results of which we could not foresee—which would be the case if the carrying out of His laws was not certain? Yet we seem to be continually expecting that He will work a miracle—*i. e.*, break His own laws expressly to relieve us of responsibility.”

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### *THE RELATIONS OF INSANITY TO MODERN CIVILIZATION.*

FOR practical purposes, insanity may be considered as incident only to civilization. Doubtless, cases of it have occurred in the ruder and uncivilized conditions of the race, from injuries of various kinds to the nervous system, and possibly other causes; but, for our present purpose, these may be ignored. So far as I know, we have no accounts which lead us to suppose the disease ever existed to any considerable extent either among the North American Indians or the natives of the Pacific isles.

On the other hand, as communities, states, and nations advance in the so-called conditions of civilization, as society

becomes more settled and its conditions more permanent and stable, insanity appears. Unfortunately, we have no statistics which show how high a ratio it sustained to the general population during the last few centuries in European countries, but there can be little doubt that at the present time it bears a higher ratio to the whole number of the population, both in Europe and this country, than at any former period of history. This is indeed a remarkable commentary on, a serious charge to bring against, our modern civilization, and it may be well to examine for a little the relations of the two conditions. Shall we say that civilization and insanity stand in the relation of *cause* and *effect*? In other words, does the passing from a state of savage life to one of regularity and industry, from a state of ignorance to one of learning and refinement, from the conditions of uncertain and limited supply to one of fairly certain and abundant supply, have so unfavorable an effect upon the nervous system as to develop this disease and cause its increase? This would appear to be impossible, and we are led to inquire what relation the one sustains to the other.

I think it may be stated in a general way that there are certain conditions incident to, and growing out of, a high state of civilization, which in some degree tend to explain both the development and increase of insanity. The first to which I will allude is *a vicious, imperfect, and injudicious education*.

As society advances in the arts and conditions attending a higher state of civilization, property increases rapidly, and, during the last half-century, it has been a very common occurrence that families who have for generations been cradled and reared in poverty, and all their lives have been obliged to struggle for the ordinary necessities of life, have been suddenly lifted into affluence and the surroundings of wealth. Labor, which before had been a necessity and a blessing, is now looked upon as a curse. That family discipline which before had been a necessity, and had secured a manual occupation, and which now should secure at least an occupation for the brain, is altogether gone; while, in consequence, the child is left—nay, too often encouraged—to assert his own

preferences in all things, and the will to strengthen itself in idleness and general demoralization. That education for the brain which alone could properly fit it for the changed conditions which environ it, and strengthen it to contend against the illusive and dangerous conditions of wealth, and the disappointment of reverses sure to come, is altogether neglected. Serious results in the way of disease may possibly not come so long as property lasts, but when, as is too often the case, adversity comes, the unfortunate one is left with neither the means nor the ability to cope with the adversities of life. Disappointment, anxiety, and consequent worry, producing irregularity of brain action; opposition to a will grown strong in having its own way, acting upon a brain weak from the lack of discipline, very often results in upsetting the mind.

Or, again, the education may be of very *imperfect character*. In this nineteenth century, everybody is in a hurry. The race seems to have suddenly awoke to the realization that life is short, and what is done must be done quickly, and it cannot take time to become educated. It is a race from childhood to manhood, from the cradle to the spelling-book, from the spelling-book to the arithmetic, and from the arithmetic I had almost, and, perhaps, could truthfully have said, to the fully developed responsibilities of life. Fifty years ago, they did not do things so rapidly. The artisan or mechanic was regularly apprenticed to serve his three or his seven long years, in which thoroughly to master both the principles and details of the calling he had chosen, or which had been chosen for him for life. This was the period of his education, and when this was finished, he was expected to have made such acquisitions as would enable him intelligently to accomplish such tasks as should devolve upon him. The same was true in reference to all the trades and professions. We are all familiar with the changed conditions of to-day. How few in the various trades and employments go through any lengthened apprenticeship or educational process! A few months or a year or two—time enough to master the first steps—is taken, and then the ambitious one starts for himself. The man who

should have been a learner aspires to become a master; the man fitted only to labor on a farm under the direction of others becomes himself proprietor, with little more knowledge of the character of the soils he tills, and of their needs of enrichment, than the oxen he drives. In other words, the mechanic, the farmer, artisans of almost all kinds, as well as the professional man, assume charge of, and undertake to manage, the details of callings in life they have never half-learned. I need not say such men have not half a chance in the hurry, competition, and struggle of this nineteenth century. The anxiety and worry of life are increased a hundred-fold, and are sure to tell in time on the nervous system.

Or, once more, the education may be of an *injudicious character*, relative to the age of the person. I am fully persuaded of the evils resulting to the brain from the forcing process prevalent in many of our public schools at the present time, especially at that period of life when all the forces of the system are, or should be, largely consumed in physical development. The muscular and alimentary systems are so liable to injury by overwork when they are in the formative period of childhood that legislation may wisely interfere for their protection; much more so, in my view, is the delicate nervous system. In childhood, secondary metamorphosis goes on much more rapidly in all the systems than in later years, and this is especially true of the nervous system. If, then, the brain be over-stimulated by tasks at this period, this action will necessarily be much increased, and the brain function will be more likely to become impaired. The evils, however, may not manifest themselves so much in the form of insanity as in a system developed in improper proportions; the muscular and alimentary systems being left in a large degree to themselves, while the brain is unduly stimulated. In later years, it seeks revenge in inability or refusal to work, or in that general condition termed nervousness. The person is inharmoniously developed, and proves of precious little use to himself or to the community of which he may be a member. It seems to me that the true idea of education is the uniform



development of all the systems of the body together,—a leading out, building up, and strengthening of these several parts for whatever calling or profession may be chosen in life, in such a manner that the individual shall be qualified to adjust himself or herself to the general conditions and requirements of society, without friction to self or others. How far short of this ideal system are those in operation generally we all have abundant opportunity to observe, by the many mental waifs yearly cast upon society.

Another condition arising in connection with the surroundings of civilization, of a somewhat different character from the former, is *the increased facilities of gratifying physical passions and consequent excesses.*

There are thousands of persons who get on well enough while obliged to live in the simplicity and continence of a laborious life, and yet when possessed of the means will suddenly rush into wild excesses, and in a few years their nervous systems become poisoned and wrecked. In this nineteenth century there exists a tendency to herd together to an extent we fail to realize. Cities have been springing up all over England and America with a rapidity, and increasing in a ratio, before unknown. "Where the carcass is there will the eagles be gathered together." Cities furnish the temptations to, and the means of, physical excesses. They enrich the city vicinage and serve to allure those who have never learned that the violation of physical law leads to death, or, what is often a thousand times worse than physical death, viz., a poisoned and diseased life. If the effects ceased with those primarily concerned, the mischief would be less, but, unfortunately for society, they pass on to the next generation unless, as is frequently the case, through a merciful provision of law there does not come another generation. We learn that the intemperate and vicious will be shut out of the kingdom of heaven. They are shut out from the kingdom of health while here on earth, and the retribution of their works follows them with a surety, and often a severity, which can be fully realized only by physicians. As an example in point, I may refer to

a class of laborers in some parts of England. When living with the bare necessities of life and obliged to practice the habits of frugality and industry, general paralysis of the insane was almost unknown among them. But in consequence of physical excesses, made possible and easy by obtaining, through labor combinations, the means necessary, this disease, whose march is straight on to the grave, has appeared to an extent heretofore unknown among any other class of society.

The same process is silently proceeding, on a less marked scale, in all the great cities and their vicinage, among those poisoned by indulgences of their passions.

Another condition may be comprised in *the practices and daily habits of life*, more especially among the agricultural portion of the population of New England and possibly other sections of the country.

The stimulus which arises from the general increase and diffusion of wealth has acted upon no class of society more strongly than the one now under consideration. As a rule, they are ambitious, and this ambition is stimulated by their surroundings and the changed conditions of society incident to the increased facilities for travel by railroads and steam-ships. Seeing others surrounded by the results of wealth, they become profoundly impressed with its importance and desirability, and are willing to forego almost all other considerations, that they may have it and what is incident to its possession. Their children must have no ordinary education. A son must go to college and have a preparation for some form of professional life. Their daughters must attend seminaries and become proficient in music, whether they have any special taste for it or not. They must have a smattering of French, and German, and drawing; they must be dressed in some of the later fashions, and, in short, be able to make an appearance as good as that of their city cousins or neighbors.

All this necessitates no inconsiderable expense, and, to bring it about, the parents, and indeed the whole household, bend all their energies. In the summer, the family is aroused

at dawn of day, and in the winter, long before. Every hour is consumed in some form of productive labor if possible, and not more than seven or eight hours are permitted for sleep and relaxation. Recreations from games and holidays are considered as so much lost time. And while the system is taxed beyond its strength in labor, it is often nourished only with the plainest of food. Fresh meat is not seen on the table oftener than once a week; salt pork or beef or fish is used with potatoes, and bread made from flour robbed of its best nerve-sustaining constituents, and used while fresh, and often while hot. Stale bread is deemed an abomination, while that made from the whole wheat is fit for the poor only.

It will readily be seen how fatal to mental health such habits of life are. The results may not be apparent at once or in years,—indeed, a strong and vigorous constitution may be able to stand the strain to three score years and ten,—but they will be sure to appear in the next generation. Nature punishes the infringement of her laws sooner or later with terrible severity. Those sour grapes which the fathers ate have sharpened the cuspids of their children. They are not so strong as their parents were; they are nervous, self-willed, irritable, delicate, and unable to endure prolonged muscular or mental effort. That vigor, strength, and energy of character inherited by the parents has been expended too largely in the grand struggle to get on in the world, instead of being transmitted to their children, so that when the strain and wear and tear of disappointment in life comes on, too often the brain-power miserably fails.

We need not, however, wait for the results to appear in the children, as they only too often come in the very meridian of life. The mind having been kept for months and years in one "rut," with little change or relaxation, finally becomes impoverished, if not starved. Debarred from all those elevating and nourishing influences which come from intercourse with those in other walks of life, and from reading and a variety of duties and pursuits, by and by the nervous system becomes weakened, so that hundreds of cases appear in our hospitals

whose history may be traced to such causes and conditions, either direct or inherited, as referred to above.

Another cause growing out of the conditions of civilization, and intimately allied to the one just considered, is *too little sleep*.

When a young man, and while a student, the writer well remembers hearing some lectures from a person calling himself a physician, in which he took the ground that fifteen minutes was ample time in which to take a regular meal, and that all time spent in sleep in excess of four, or five hours at most, was so much lost time; that if persons slept only five hours instead of eight, they would gain more than six years of time in the course of fifty; therefore, every person who was so much of a sluggard as to sleep eight hours instead of five was responsible for wasting six years in fifty. That ambitious insect, the ant, was held up by the doctor as an example of industry and lofty enterprise, worthy the imitation of everybody who expects to do much in life—as if he knew how many hours that creature is in the habit of sleeping every year. He might about as well have put his case stronger, and argued that it was everybody's duty to sleep only two of the twenty-four hours, because, forsooth, we could gain more than twelve years in the fifty by so doing. Unfortunately for society, this man was only one of several who have written and taught that persons generally sleep too much. It would have been better for those influenced by these teachings if their authors had never been born. The truth is that most people, especially the laboring classes in our cities as well as in the country, sleep too little. This is true not only of adults, but of children. How often do we see little children out in the streets, or at tasks, long after they should have been in bed! How often are they called in the morning long before they would have waked, and put to some task or other, and the delicate structure of the brain is kept in activity sixteen or seventeen hours of the twenty-four! This habit, being formed in childhood, extends into adult life, and becomes so fixed that it is difficult for the brain to change its custom. In



fact, the period of wakefulness rather tends to increase, so that it is limited to six or seven instead of eight or nine hours. The man who regularly and soundly sleeps his eight or nine hours, whatever may be his occupation in life, is the man who is capable of large physical or mental efforts. I do not mean that there may not be exceptions to this rule. There have been those who could do with four or five hours, and work well; there are probably many such to-day, but these are rather exceptions. The great mass of people require more for good mental health.

Sleep is to the brain what rest is to the body,—

“Sleep, that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,  
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,  
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,  
Chief nourisher in life's feast.”

No words could paint more beautifully and effectively the office of sleep than these of England's greatest poet. All nature teaches the importance of sleep. Every tree and shrub and vine has its period of sleep, and if stimulated into ceaseless activity would soon die. Every portion of the human system is subject to the same great law. The stomach must have its periods of rest; and there are times during every twenty-four hours when the kidneys secrete very little, if any, urine. It is often said that the heart is an exception to this rule; that its beat never ceases from more than six months before birth until nature's last great debt is paid in death. But in truth it is at entire rest nearly if not quite one-third of the whole time. Its action consists of a *first* and a *second* sound, covering the contraction of right and left auricles and ventricles, and then a rest,—so far as we know, a perfect one. Reckoning this at one-third the time taken in each full action of the heart, and we have more than twenty years of perfect quiet out of the three score and ten. The same is true to even a larger extent in the function of respiration. The muscles concerned in the operation are at entire rest more than one-third of the time. This is an absolute necessity for these organs. Nor is the brain

any exception to the law. During every moment of consciousness, the brain is in activity. The peculiar process of cerebration, whatever that may consist of, is taking place; thought after thought comes forth, nor can we help it. It is only when the peculiar connection or chain of connection of one brain-cell with another is broken, and consciousness fades away into the dreamless land of perfect sleep, that the brain is at rest. In this state it recuperates its exhausted energy and power, and stores them up for future need. The period of wakefulness is one of constant wear. \*Every thought is generated at the expense of brain-cells, which can be fully replaced only by periods of properly regulated repose. If, therefore, these are not secured by sleep, if the brain, through over-stimulation, is not left to recuperate, its energy becomes exhausted; debility, disease, and finally disintegration, supervene. Hence, the story is almost always the same; for weeks and months before the indications of active insanity appear, the patient has been anxious, worried, and wakeful, not sleeping more than four or five hours out of the twenty-four. The poor brain, unable to do its constant work, begins to waver, to show signs of weakness or aberration; hallucinations or delusions hover around, like floating shadows in the air, until finally disease comes and

“Plants his siege

Against the mind, the which he pricks and wounds  
With many legions of strange fantasies,  
Which in their throng and press to that last hold  
Confound themselves.”

Another condition incident to civilization which tends largely to develop and increase insanity, and the last to which I will refer, is *the unequal distribution of the means of living*, especially in large cities and manufacturing communities.

In the great contests of life, the weaker go to the wall. That term, “the survival of the fittest,” in the struggle of life, covers a large ground, and numberless are the tales of suffering, want, and disease which never come to the light of day, but are none the less terrible as growing out of this struggle. The sanitary surroundings of those portions of our large cities

and those of Europe which are occupied by the poorer classes of society are often of the worst character. Impure air, from overcrowding, the effect of which upon the delicate tissue of the nervous system is deleterious in the highest degree; the lack of all facilities for bathing; the insufficient, irregular, and often unwholesome food-supply, and its improper preparation for use; the habit of drunkenness, from the use of alcohol in its worst forms, and the habit of daily tipping, which keeps the brain in a constant state of excitement; together with the immoral practices which grow out of such surroundings and practices, all tend strongly in one direction. By going through the hospitals for the insane in the vicinity of New York, or those which are the recipients of the mental wrecks which drift out of the lower grades of society in Boston, or, again, those located near the great manufacturing cities of England, we gain new conceptions of the terrible power of the struggle implied in the refining process incident to a passage up to what are termed the higher grades of civilization.

We have seen in the spring season of the year the trees of an orchard white with unnumbered blossoms. Myriads on myriads feed every passing breeze with delicious odors for a day, and then drop to the ground forever. And when the fruit is formed on the tree, only a very limited number of the whole ever attain to maturity and perfection, while the ground is strewn with the windfalls and the useless. Why one goes on to maturity and perfection while the other perishes so soon we may not say with certainty, but doubtless the one has some slight degree of advantage in the starting of the voyage; it may be a moment or an hour of time, or a particle of nourishment, but whatever it is, the consequence is apparent.

So it is in the grand struggle of human life. Myriads perish at the very start, and as the process of life goes on, one by one, always the weaker, by reason of some defect in organization, inherited or acquired, falls out by the way. Christianity has taught us to pick them up and try to nurse them to strength for further battle. She has built hospitals

and asylums, and these weaker ones drift into these refuges from the storm. So it has been, and so it will be in the future. The stronger in body and mind will rise above and triumph over the hardnenses and roughnenses of life, becoming stronger by the very effort. To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance of the possessions of life, but that abundance is drawn from him that hath not, and he falls out of the way as the fruit untimely falls from the tree. Many of them are the psychological windfalls of society.

If the views presented above are correct, we cannot consider civilization as directly the cause of insanity. Indeed, we believe that the educational and disciplinary processes involved in passing to a higher state of civilization tend in the main to strengthen the nervous system and prepare it to resist the encroachments of disease, and to maintain a larger degree of mental health than would be possible without them. And yet there are certain incidental conditions connected with and growing out of its progress which do largely conspire to act as causes, and which may in a measure serve to explain its development and increase among communities tending toward or inheriting an older civilization.

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## PART VI. ABOUT THE YOUNG FOLKS.

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### *A TALK WITH GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS.*

“**B**UT there are girls, too, in the cities and the towns. Do not they deserve to be talked with in a friendly way, as well as the boys? \* Have n't you something to say to them?”

Thus a chorus of girls and their mothers.

I confess to you, maidens and matrons, that the task to which you thus summoned me was one that I undertook with some diffidence. When I was talking to boys, I was sure of my ground. Something about boys I do know, for I have been a boy; but the wisdom of experience fails me when I try to discuss the problems of life as they present themselves to girls. That I might have something worth saying, I determined, therefore, to seek instruction by sending a circular letter to a large number of those who once were girls, but who now are women of experience and reputation, asking them to tell me—

“I. What are the most common defects in the training of our girls?”

\* The reference is to an article by the same writer, entitled “The Disadvantages of City Boys,” which had been printed in the “St. Nicholas” two months before.

“2. What principles of conduct are most important, and what habits most essential, to the development of a useful and noble womanhood?”

This circular brought me more than forty letters, and it is upon the truths contained in these letters that this talk will be founded. I only undertake to reflect, in an orderly way, some of the advice of these wise women. I shall give you their words sometimes, and sometimes my own.

I shall find it necessary, now and then, to turn in this talk from the girls to their mothers. Indeed, a large share of what is written in these letters is intended for mothers rather than for girls, and cannot, therefore, be so freely used in this place as I should like to use it; but the girls are generous enough, I am sure, to be willing that their mothers, and their fathers, too, should have some share of the advice.

In the first place, then, girls make a great mistake in being careless about their health. I do not know that they are any more careless than boys, but their habits of life, and especially their habits of dress, are generally more injurious to health than those of boys. The great majority of our girls take much less vigorous exercise in the open air than is good for them: those who can walk three or four miles without exhaustion are exceptions.

“It seems to me a mistake,” says one of my correspondents, “that boys and girls should be trained so differently, particularly in regard to out-of-door sports. With a strong love for everything in nature, I remember, as a child, what torture it was to be kept always in-doors, in some feminine employment, while my strong brothers (strong on this very account, perhaps) could spend all their leisure time in the open air. I was much interested years ago in reading a sketch of Harriet Hosmer’s girlhood. Her father, having lost all his children by consumption, and finding her delicate, resolved to bring her up as a boy, teaching her all sorts of athletic sports, and thus making her a strong, healthy woman.”

The lack of exercise on the part of girls is due, no doubt, in part, to the foolish styles of dress, in which it is impossible





LONGING FOR CHANGE.



for them to be out in rough weather, or to make any considerable muscular exertion. "The lack of warmth in clothing, and the foolish adjustment of what is worn," are said in one of these letters to be some of the chief causes that produce "the peculiar nervous diseases to which women are subject."

I wish I could make you all understand how great a mistake you make when you sacrifice health, or the physical comfort on which health depends, to appearance or to any other earthly good; when you neglect to provide, by regular exercise and wise care, a good stock of physical vigor for the labors and the burdens of the coming years. Without this foundation, all that you can learn in school, and all that wealth can buy for you, will be worthless. "Intellect in an enfeebled body," says some one whom I quote from memory, "is like gold in a spent swimmer's pocket,—it only makes him sink the sooner."

Another great mistake that many of our girls are making, and that their mothers are either encouraging or allowing them to make, is that of spending their time out of school in idleness, or in frivolous amusements, doing no work to speak of, and learning nothing about the practical duties and the serious cares of life. It is not only in the wealthier families that the girls are growing up indolent and unpracticed in household work; indeed, I think that more attention is paid to the industrial training of girls in the wealthiest families than in the families of mechanics and of people in moderate circumstances, where the mothers are compelled to work hard all the while.

"Within the last week," says one of my correspondents, "I have heard two mothers, worthy women in most respects, say, the first, that her daughter never did any sweeping. Why, if she wants to say to her companions, 'I never swept a room in my life,' and takes any comfort in it, let her say it; and yet that mother is sorrowing much over the short-comings of that very daughter. The other said she would not let her daughter do anything in the kitchen. Poor deluded woman! She did it all herself, instead!"

The habits of indolence and of helplessness that are thus formed are not the greatest evils resulting from this bad prac-

tice: the selfishness that it fosters is the worst thing about it. How devoid of conscience, how lacking in all true sense of tenderness, or even of justice, a girl must be who will thus consent to devote all her time out of school to pleasuring, while her mother is bearing all the heavy burdens of the household! And the foolish way in which mothers themselves sometimes talk about this, even in the presence of their children, is mischievous in the extreme. "Oh, Hattie is so absorbed with her books, or her crayons, or her embroidery, that she takes no interest in household matters, and I do not like to call upon her." As if the daughter belonged to a superior order of beings, and must not soil her hands or ruffle her temper with necessary house-work! The mother is the drudge; the daughter is the fine lady for whom she toils. No mother who suffers such a state of things as this can preserve the respect of her daughter; and the respect of her daughter no mother can afford to lose.

The result of all this is to form in the minds of many girls not only a distaste for labor, but a contempt for it, and a purpose to avoid it as long as they live, by some means or other.

There is scarcely one of these forty letters which does not mention this as one of the chief errors in the training of our girls at the present day. It is not universal, but it is altogether too prevalent. And I want to say to you, girls, that if you are allowing yourselves to grow up with such habits of indolence and such notions about work, you are preparing for yourselves a miserable future.

"Work," says one of my letters,—and it is written by a woman who does not need to labor for her own support, and who does enjoy with a keen relish the refinements of life,—  
"work, which you so plainly showed to be good for our boys, is quite as necessary for our girls."

Closely connected with what has just been said is the mistake of many girls in making dress the main business of life. I quote now from one of my letters, whose writer has had unusual opportunities of observing the things she describes:

"From the time when the little one can totter to the mirror to see 'how sweetly she looks in her new hat,' to the hour when the bride at the altar gives more thought to the arrangement of her train and veil than to the vows she is taking upon herself, too large a share of time and thought is devoted by mothers and daughters to dress."

"I have heard," writes one of my correspondents, "a vain mother say of her beautiful baby, 'I'm so glad it's a girl; I can dress her so much finer than I could a boy.'" O woman! woman! to what depths of degradation you have sunk when you can look into the face of a baby lying in your lap,—the face of a child that God has given you to train for the service of earth and the glory of heaven,—and have such a thought as that find a moment's lodgment in your mind! The pity of it, the pity of it, that children should ever be given to such women! It is one of the inscrutable things of Providence. What can such a woman do but destroy the souls of her children?

Listen to these strong words of another correspondent:

"From the cradle to the casket, and including them both, the important question is not of the spirit and its destiny, but of the frail house of the soul,—how much money it can be made to represent,—what becomes it, and is it all in the latest fashion. The occasional sight of a young girl simply and girlishly dressed is like a sight of a white rose after a bewildering walk through lines of hollyhocks and sunflowers. It is generally conceded that early tastes leave indelible results in character. What may be prophesied for the future of our girls with their banged, befrizzed hair, jingling ornaments, and other fashions, which some one has well characterized as 'screaming fashions'?"

It is not that there is any harm in thinking about dress, or in wishing to be tastefully attired; it is only that personal appearance comes to be in the minds of so many of you the one subject, to which everything else is subordinate. This weakness, if indulged, must belittle and degrade you.

I do not think that the girls or their mothers are wholly to blame for this absorbing devotion to dress. The vanity of

women is stimulated by the foolishness of men. A young woman who is modestly and plainly clad is much less likely to attract the notice of young men than one who is gorgeously arrayed. From bright, intelligent, finely cultured, sensible girls, whose chief adorning is *not* the adorning of braided hair, or golden ornaments, or of gay clothing, the young men often turn away in quest of some creature glittering in silks and jewelry, with a dull mind and a selfish heart. But I beseech you to remember, girls, that a young man who cares for nothing but "style" in a woman is a young man whose admiration you can well afford to do without. If that is all he cares for in you, you cannot trust his fidelity; when you and your finery have faded, some bird in gayer feathers than you are wearing will easily entice him away from you, and the sacred ties of marriage and parentage will prove no barrier to his wayward fancies. The girl who catches a husband by fine dress too often finds that the prize she has won is a broken heart.

Another mistake that many of our girls are making is in devoting too much of their time to novel-reading. The reading of an occasional novel of pure and healthful tone may be not only an innocent diversion, but a good mental stimulant; but the reading of the lighter sort of novels (which, if they do not teach bad morality, do represent life in a morbid and unreal light, and awaken cravings that never can be satisfied), and the reading of one or two or three of them in a week, as is the common habit of many of our girls, must prove grievously injurious to their minds and hearts. It is mental dissipation of a very dangerous sort; its influence is more insidious than, but I am not sure that it is not quite as fatal to character as, the habitual use of strong drink. Certainly, the mental dissipation of novel-reading is vastly more prevalent than the other sort of dissipation, not only in "the best society," but in the second best, as well; and five women's lives are ruined by the one where one life is wrecked by the other. "Ruined," do I say? Yes; no weaker word tells the whole truth. This intemperate craving for sensational



fiction weakens the mental grasp, destroys the love of good reading, and the power of sober and rational thinking, takes away all relish from the realities of life, breeds discontent and indolence and selfishness, and makes the one who is addicted to it a weak, frivolous, petulant, miserable being. I see girls all around me in whom these results are working themselves out steadily and fatally.

Another mistake which our girls are making—or which their parents are making—is a too early initiation into the excitements and frivolities of what is called society. It was formerly the rule for girls to wait until their school-days were over before they made their appearance in fashionable society. At what age, let us inquire, does the average young lady of our cities now make her *début*? From my observations, I should answer at about the age of three. They are not older than that when they begin to go to children's parties, for which they are dressed as elaborately as they would be for a fancy ball. From this age onward, they are never out of society; by the time they are six or eight years old, they are members of clubs, and spend frequent evenings out, and the demands of social diversion and display multiply with their years.

"I think," writes one of my correspondents, who loves little girls, "the greatest defect in the training of girls is in letting them think too much of their clothes and of the boys. Little girls that ought to be busy with their books and their dolls are often dressed up like dolls themselves, and encouraged to act in a coquettish manner that many of their elders could not equal."

"It seems to me," writes another, "that one prominent defect in our modern training of girls is undue haste in making them society young ladies, and cultivating a fondness for admiration by lavish display of dress. Before leaving the nursery, many a child does penance by being made a figure on which a vain mamma may gratify her taste in elegant fabrics and exquisite laces to be exhibited at a fashionable children's party. This trait easily becomes a controlling one,

and girls scarcely in their teens, with the *blasé* manner of a woman of the world, will scan a lady's dress, tell you at once the quality of the material, the rarity of the laces, the value of the jewels—even venture an opinion whether or not it be one of Worth's latest designs, showing what apt scholars they have become."

"It is in the claims of society upon our girls," writes another, who knows them well, "that their strength is most severely taxed, and their characters endangered. To meet creditably the demands of this master, our girls must attend day-school, dancing-school, take music lessons, go to parties, concerts, the theater, sociables; be active members of cooking-clubs, archery-clubs, reading-clubs; ride, skate, walk, and go to the health-lift. To do this and to dress with appropriate anxiety for each one of the occasions, a young girl runs an appalling gauntlet of foes to the healthy development of her soul and body."

I am sure that the early contact of our girls with the vanities and the insincerities and the excitements of social life is doing a great injury to many of them. Girls of from twelve to sixteen years of age, who ought to be in bed every night at nine o'clock, are out at parties till midnight, and sometimes later, thus destroying their health and keeping their young heads filled with thoughts which are not conducive to healthy mental or moral growth.

And as for the children's parties to which my correspondents apply words of such severity, I cannot conceive anything more hurtful than they are in the way that they are generally managed. If a little company of children could be brought together in the afternoon or in the early evening, all plainly dressed, so that they might romp and play to their hearts' content, and take no thought for their raiment—if they could be healthily fed, and wisely amused, with no resort to kissing-games, and no suggestions of beaux—that would be innocent enough; but to dress these children in silks and laces, in kid gloves and kid slippers, with frizzed hair and jewelry—to parade them up and down the drawing-rooms for the foolish

mothers who are in attendance to comment on their dresses in their hearing, saying, "Oh, you dear little thing! How sweet you look! What a beautiful dress! How that color becomes her!" then to chaff them about their lovers and sweethearts, and laugh at their precocious flirtations—oh, it is pitiful! pitiful! I say to you, mothers, that if there are any children for whom my heart aches it is these innocent, beautiful children who are being sacrificed on the altars of foolish fashion. The children of the poor, thinly clad, poorly fed, rudely taught, are not any more to be pitied than are many of the children of the rich; their bodies may suffer more, but their souls are not any more likely to be pampered and corrupted and destroyed.

From this early entrance into fashionable society the girls go right on, as I have said, plunging a little deeper every year into the currents of social life, until many of them, as my friend has said, are utterly *blasé* before they are twenty. Society is a squeezed orange; they have got all the flavor out of it, they have nothing serious nor sacred to live for, and you sometimes hear them wishing they were dead.

I suppose that many of us who are parents yield, with many misgivings and protests, to this bad custom, which drags our children into social life and its excitements at such an early age. We give in to it because all the rest do, and because it is hard to deny to our children what all their companions are allowed. And sometimes I suspect you might go into a company of girls and boys who are keeping late hours, and carrying their social diversions to an injurious excess, and find there not a single child whose parents did not heartily disapprove of this excess. Yet the thing is allowed not so much because the parents lack authority over their children as because they lack the firmness to resist a bad social custom.

I will mention only one more sad mistake which some—I hope not many—of our girls are making, and it shall be described for you in the language of one who has had the amplest opportunities of knowing whereof she speaks:

“The most common defect in the training of girls is, in my judgment, the ignoring of the command to honor and obey parents. From the age of thirteen, girls and parents alike seem to regard this commandment as a dead letter. The girl of thirteen regards herself as her own mistress; she is already a woman in her own estimation, and has a right to do as she likes. If she prefers to go to parties, sociables, and so forth, three or four evenings in a week, rather than spend her evenings in study, she does so. Both she and her parents, however, expect and demand that she is to be ranked at graduation as high as the laborious, self-denying, faithful worker in her class.

“Again, in one congregation in this city I know of four cases well worthy of thoughtful consideration. The four families all are respectable, such people as form the majority of your own congregation. In each of three of these families is only one child. Each one of these three girls left school when she chose to do so, went into society when she pleased, spent as much time on the street as she liked, and all three, still under twenty, have now become a by-word and reproach among all who know them. In the fourth family there were three girls, two of whom cast off all restraint, while father and mother were regularly taking part in prayer-meetings. This father and mother excused themselves by saying they did not know what their girls were doing, yet the girls lived at home all the time, and their neighbors knew all about their conduct.”

This habit of running loose, of constantly seeking the street for amusement, and even of making chance acquaintances there, is practiced by some of the girls of our good families, and it is not at all pleasant to see them on the public thoroughfares, and to witness their hoydenish ways. I know that they mean no harm by it, but it often results in harm; the delicate bloom of maiden modesty is soiled by too much familiarity with the public streets of a city, and a kind of boldness is acquired which is not becoming in a woman.

Such are some of the errors which are frequently committed in the training of our girls, and some of the dangers to which they are exposed; I am sure that you will see that none of



them are imaginary, and that all of them are serious. I know that many of you, girls, and mothers, too, are fully aware of them, and on your guard against them. If I have succeeded in drawing the more careful attention of any of you to any of them, I shall not have written in vain.

I have left myself small space to speak of the principles and habits requisite to the development of a noble womanhood. These, however, have been suggested in what I have said already. In avoiding the mistakes to which I have referred, you will be guided to the right principles of conduct. Let me speak very briefly of some of the elements which go to make up a beautiful womanly character :

The first is industry. Willingness and ability to work lie, as I have said already, at the basis of all good character. The moral discipline, the patience, the steadiness of purpose, the power to overcome, that are gained in work, and only in work, are just as necessary to women as to men ; and the girl who is given no chance of learning these traits is sadly defrauded.

Besides, there are certain strong reasons why girls ought to be well trained in that particular kind of work which they are most likely to be called to perform. "All women, however situated," writes one of my correspondents, "should have a practical knowledge of manual labor ; should know how to cook, to purchase household stores, how to avoid waste, how to buy, cut, and sew garments, how to nurse the sick. All these things should be a part of a thorough education, and few women can pass through life, no matter what their means or station, who will not find the time when such knowledge will help others, even if they personally may get on very well without it." So say a great many of them, and it is all true.

"I would train my daughter," writes one, "to regard all work, in the broadest meaning, as honorable. Whatever is necessary to be done is honorable work, for highest and lowest alike."

After industry comes thoroughness. It is not enough to be busy ; we ought to do *well* whatever our hands find to do, else we may be forced to say what Hugo Grotius said when he

came to the end: "Alas! I have spent my life in laboriously doing nothing." To be thorough in study, to be thorough in all work, ought to be the aim of every girl, not less than of every boy. Our methods of female education have encouraged superficiality rather than thoroughness; we have given our girls smatterings of many things, and mastery of few things. We teach them a little Latin, and a little French, and a little Italian, and a little German, and a little Spanish, and a little English—precious little, too, generally; we give them a few lessons on the piano (not often too few, however, of these), and a few lessons on the organ, and a few on the harp, and a few on the guitar, and a few, perhaps, on the violin or the banjo; we let them take oil-painting for a quarter, and water-colors for a quarter, and crayons for a quarter, and china decoration for a quarter, and so on, and so on; and the poor things, when they are done with it all, know a little of everything, and not much of anything. Don't do it, girls; life is short and art is long; you cannot be mistresses of all the arts. It is better to confine yourself to a single branch and make yourself proficient in that. It is much better to say, "This one thing I *do*," than to say, "These forty things I dabble in."

After thoroughness, independence. A habit of relying on your own judgment, a habit of thinking for yourself, and caring for yourself, not selfishly, but in a true womanly fashion—a habit of taking responsibility and bearing it bravely is one of the habits that women as well as men need to cultivate. Your parents ought to give you some chance to form this habit; it is a great mistake to shield a girl from all care, and then, by and by, when the helpers on whom she has leaned fall by her side, to leave her, with judgment untrained and powers undisciplined, to carry the burdens of life.

Respect for character, for manhood and womanhood, more than for money or rank, or even genius, is another of the first lessons that every girl ought to learn. Virtue, truth, fidelity, these are the shining things that every true woman honors, and she who values above these a coat-of-arms or a bank account,

degrades herself. There is a silly snobbery among some of our girls that is the reverse of lovely. I see them now and then spurning association with worthy young men and women who are poor, and hear them talking in a large way about blue blood, when all the blue blood that is in their veins flowed into them from the veins of tanners or wood-choppers. Shame upon the girl who cannot recognize and honor in others the same qualities that lifted her father or her grandfather to wealth and station !

I might speak of many other elements of character indispensable to the truest womanhood, such as truthfulness, and conscientiousness, and purity, and modesty, and fidelity, but I will only name one more, which sums up much of what my friends have written, and that is :

Consecration. It is a great word. It means many things. It means, to begin with, that God has some purpose concerning you, some good work for each of you to do. It means that He has given you the power to serve in some way, and that He wishes you to devote that power which He has given you to that service for which He created you. What kind of work He has for you to do I cannot tell; but I know that He has called every one of you, with a high calling, to some ennobling work. Not to be butterflies, not to be drones, not to be sponges, has He called any of you; but to be helpers, and ministers, and friends of all good; to wait with ready hands and loving hearts for the service that you can do for Him. Most of you will be called, by and by, to the dignity of wifehood and motherhood; there is no greater dignity than that, and no nobler work.

One of the ladies asked me to describe the successful woman. There is more than one type, I answer, but among them all is none more illustrious than that of the wife and mother; the woman who builds and rules a beautiful and happy home; who holds the honor of her husband and the reverence of her children; who leads those whom God has given her up to vigorous and virtuous manhood and womanhood, imparting to them by daily communion with them her

own wisdom and nobleness, and sending them forth to do good and brave service in the world. The woman who does such work as this, I say, is a successful woman; and there is no grander work than this within the measure of a man or even of an angel.

But marriage is not for all of you, and should not be for any of you the chief end. "I try to teach my daughter," writes one, "that while happy wifehood is the glory and blessing of every true-hearted woman's life, and maternity the crown of this,—more to be desired than queendom,—she should hold herself too pure and dear a thing to marry for home, or position, or because it is expected of her." Many women are living happily and nobly out of wedlock, and no one is fit for it who is not fit to live without it.

To what kind of service our Lord has called you, then, I cannot tell; but I know that for you as for Him, the joy of life must be, not in being ministered unto, but in ministering. God help you to understand it, girls, before it is too late. There is so much good in living, if one knows how to live; there is such delight in serving when one has learned to serve, that I do not like to see any of you going on aimlessly and selfishly, and laying up in store for yourselves a future of disquietude and gloom. There is a better and brighter way than this, a way that has never been pointed out more clearly than in the simple words of our good friend, Mr. Hale: "To look up and not down; to look forward and not back; to look out and not in; and to lend a hand." Set your feet in that path, and follow it patiently, and you will find it the path "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

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*ACCOMPLISHMENTS.*

SO-CALLED accomplishments are a sort of mansard roof clapped on the sounder structure of the average English education. Why they are thus denominated, when in the possession of them so little is really accomplished, it is difficult to determine. Their material is generally as unsubstantial as that of the thing to which they have been compared, and, subjected to the fiery tests of life and experience, they are almost as readily destroyed. The acquirement of a little knowledge of music, certain rules of drawing, the process of mixing colors, and a few foreign phrases, are oftenest the result of much misapplied industry. If music, drawing, and painting were studied and cultivated as arts, with the intent of becoming thoroughly proficient in them, that they might stand, if need be, in good, practical stead, then the time devoted to them would not be wasted. Instead of being mental folios in which to deck their ill-clothed minds in public, these attainments would be of deep and lasting satisfaction to their possessors, even though not put to any severer trial.

Few girls care enough for music and drawing to pursue them after being freed from the restraint of masters, and many would never begin such study were it not for the ambition of parents, guided by a society that demands all girls to be molded after one model. This idea is so obviously impossible as to be absurd. Countless good gardeners, milliners, dress-makers, housekeepers, have been spoiled in poor piano-players, simply because knowledge of the piano was considered an elegant acquisition; while an understanding of the other things was regarded as something that only necessity should require. The hours of strumming on unresponsive instruments (unresponsive because touched by no sympathetic fingers), which, otherwise employed, might have made capital cooks, are incalculable.

The original design was good—to enable women to impart pleasure and improvement to themselves and others; but it signally fails. Seldom are girls willing to play, or exhibit the

work of their pencil, to critical ears and eyes; and when good nature impels them to, what have they to offer? Ordinarily, the merest smattering—more repellent to ripe judgment than total ignorance would be.

It is evident that an acquaintance with the alphabet of many branches is not so great an aid to intellectual improvement as being thoroughly versed in one. In this short life, it is much to know even one thing well. If thoroughly understood, everything, from steak-broiling to oratorio-composing, should be considered an accomplishment. Pupils apt at figures should be taught book-keeping in place of minims and semibreves; and natural nurses given an insight into bottles and bandages, in lieu of curved lines and neutral tint. Thus the training of the mind in a direction at once natural and useful contributes to its healthiest growth, and redounds to individual advancement and general advantage.

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### *THE BOY WHO WANTS TO BE A SAILOR.*

THE boy in the family who wants to be a sailor is usually a source of more trouble in the present and of more anxiety for the future than all the other boys who are reconciled to mercantile or professional pursuits on shore put together, even though there are half a dozen of them. He is what Mark Twain would call an example of the composite order of human architecture,—a contradictory being, positive in some ways and negative in others, blending in his effusive disposition a varied assortment of vices and virtues; the merry plague of all who surround him, annoying and coaxing in a breath; of whom many are ready to predict evil, while, perhaps, only his mother, with clear, tender, affectionate discernment, penetrates the reserve of goodness that lies below the rough surface of his rebellious nature.

Few homes have not known such a boy, and few mothers and fathers who possess many boys have not been put to their wits' ends in the endeavor to place him where he should be as exempt as possible from the temptations and hardships of his chosen profession. If he is earnest in his purpose, and physically adapted to so arduous an occupation, it is as difficult to dissuade him as it is foolish to tell him that a sea-faring life is degrading, unremunerative, and unworthy of his best efforts. He can never be made to believe *that*,—he whose brain is rife with the glowing remembrances of Drake, Nelson, Perry, Lawrence, and Farragut, all of whom, with at least a hundred others, are ineffaceably enshrined in his heart; no lover ever loved his mistress with more longing tenderness than this boy loves a ship, and the breath of the sea widens his nostrils and lends the sparkle of awakened enthusiasm to his eyes.

But, with the best intentions in the world, and sometimes with the worst results, many parents try to make a landsman of him by conjuring up, not only the real disadvantage of sea-faring, the tyranny and brutality of some captains and mates, the wretched pay, the slow promotion, and the limitations of success, but also imaginary or exceptional miseries, of which they may have acquired a knowledge by reading without sufficient discrimination such a philippic as "Among Our Sailors," by J. G. Jewell. That well-meaning little book certainly contains enough of horrors committed on the high seas to deter any one who believes in it, and who is not a born seaman, from launching into the profession which it describes. In some instances it would prove a valuable supplement to parental opposition. We grant that much of it is unhappily true, for young relatives of the writer have suffered from the cruelty of the captains and officers, who take advantage of their despotic positions at sea to over-punish their men; but we are considering a boy who is bound to go to sea, and it is a pitiable mistake to start him in the world with a discouraging view of his prospects. Having found out his determination, his guardians would do better by him in frankly recognizing that the sea is an honorable profession.

A certain youngster, with an ineradicable predilection for salt water, came once upon a time under the care of the writer; he was a warm-hearted, impulsive, mischievous lad, who as an infant gave his nurse and mother no peace through his acrobatic propensities, which left him with as many scars at the age of fourteen as a veteran of Balaklava, and no inducements proved strong enough to keep him ashore. He is now on his way home from the Philippine Islands; and in the present paper we desire to smooth the course of those parents who have sons like him, by describing the opportunities there are for training and placing them.

The Naval Academy at Annapolis offers an excellent education, practical training, and good treatment, and the youth who is admitted to it may thank his stars, for there is no other way so pleasant and advantageous of becoming a sailor and an accomplished gentleman. Candidates are nominated, as often as vacancies occur, by the members and delegates of the House of Representatives, each of whom has the privilege of appointing one; ten others are appointed at large by the President of the United States, and one other by the District of Columbia. A sound constitution, a fair moral character, and a thorough knowledge of the English branches are essential in the applicants, who must be over fourteen and under eighteen years of age. The examinations are held on June 21st and September 12th at Annapolis, where the applicants are required to report in person, traveling from their homes at their own expense, which, in the case of boys living at a distance, is so great that many families cannot afford it, and the benefits of the Academy are thus partly restricted to the wealthier and influential classes. Having successfully passed the examination, however, the cadet-midshipman, as the candidate is now called, finds himself in the arms of a most liberal *alma mater*; he signs articles binding himself to serve the United States Navy for eight years, including his probation in the Academy; he is comfortably lodged and well fed; five hundred dollars are paid to him as salary, and a month after his admission his traveling expenses are restored to him. We believe there is no school, college, or



workshop in which apathy or indolence is so little tolerated as at Annapolis; a boy must work earnestly and with all his strength to succeed; he must be honorable in his dealings, courteous in his manners, and clever in mathematics,—so clever that before graduation he will see not a few of his classmates retiring on account of their inability to cope with the elements of differential and integral calculus, despite their proficiency in seamanship and other branches. Vacancies and nominations are usually announced in the local newspapers of the Congressional districts in which they occur.

Besides the midshipmen, there are three classes of cadet-engineers, who are instructed in marine engineering, chemistry, mechanics, and the manufacture of iron, and are generally qualified for positions as engineers of United States steamers.

All cadets are required to deposit two hundred and twenty dollars for books and clothing on entering, which, when it is added to the traveling expenses, makes a total amount beyond the means of some persons, who are forced to seek other openings for their sons. A large number of boys determined to follow the sea, and having all the elements of excellent sailors in them, are unfitted for the Academy on account of insufficient scholarship.

A few years ago, training-schools for sailors were opened on three United States vessels, one of which, the "Minnesota," stationed at New York, has now four hundred boys on board. The boys are enlisted between the ages of sixteen and seventeen years, to serve until they are twenty-one, and must be accompanied by their guardians at the time of enlistment. They are paid ten dollars and fifty cents per month, and, if they are honorably discharged at the age of twenty-one, they receive three months' extra pay. At the age of eighteen, they are transferred from the training-ships to sea-going vessels, previous to which they are sent out on brief preparatory cruises in small sailing-vessels, fitted out by themselves under the supervision of the officers. The commanding officers of the sea-going vessels to which they are transferred continue the course of instruction begun on the training-

ships, which is divided into three departments, viz.: seamanship, gunnery, and studies. The first embraces practical and theoretical seamanship, signals, boats, and swimming; the gunnery embraces exercises with the howitzer (afloat and ashore), the Gatling gun, the pistol, and broad-sword, besides infantry tactics in accordance with the army code; and the studies embrace spelling, arithmetic, grammar, geography, history, and the Bible. A commendable regulation is to the effect that the boys cannot be detailed as attendants on the messes of officers, nor as messengers, nor as permanent cooks of messes; this prevents them from drifting into the menial condition which some who enlist ordinarily fall into, and which is fatal to the true sailor-spirit.

Enlistments are made in New York, Philadelphia, and Boston, and if the parent or guardian cannot accompany the son or ward to one of these cities on account of infirmity or distance, printed forms of declaration in reference to the boy's age and their consent will be supplied by the Navy Department at Washington, which will enable him to be enlisted without the presence of the parent or guardian. Eligible candidates must be of robust frame and vigorous constitution, and they must be able to read and write. Their traveling expenses from their homes to the port at which the training-ship is stationed are not returnable; but if they are accepted, they are provided with the necessary outfit without making a deposit, the items being charged against their wages.

While nearly all the cadets of Annapolis are the sons of well-to-do people, and are destined to be officers, the boys on the training-ships are mostly of the poorest class, and the education they receive simply qualifies them to be sailors under the graduates of the former. They have chances for advancement; if they are energetic, there is nothing to prevent their holding an admiral's or commander's commission, although heroic effort is necessary to obtain one; but the training-ships are not adapted nor intended for boys of refinement and gentle parentage, and the difficulty of placing such of these as are unable to enter the Academy may be

easily settled if their guardians have the good fortune to know some captain, officer, or merchant of trustworthy character. Hundreds of crews are shipped in the larger sea-ports from California to Maine every month; "able-bodied" seamen, "ordinary" seamen, and even "greenhorns," are in constant demand, both for American and foreign ships; but it is necessary to make a selection. If the parents have no knowledge of the captain with whom they send their son to sea, the boy is in danger of contamination by association with a dissolute crew and of ill-treatment at the hands of the mates, to say nothing of the perils of an unseaworthy vessel. If unable to do so themselves, they should engage the interest of some friendly broker or merchant, who will look out for a staunch ship and an intelligent captain; and if the broker or merchant is not at hand, they should put themselves in communication with such an organization as the Seamen's Friend Society, Wall street, New York City, the secretary of which will afford gratuitous information. There are some captains afloat whose vessels are manned by the lowest and most dangerous classes, whose authority manifests itself in systematic brutality (such as may be unavoidable in dealing with the sort of men over whom it is usually exercised, though it is monstrous to a boy), and whose example is baneful in all things. If he survives it at all, the boy returning from a voyage with a commander of this kind is sure to be discouraged, and may be ruined. There are other captains, however, who take an interest in the welfare of their crews and treat them with kindness, forming classes for their instruction at sea, and providing them with sensible reading-matter and other amusements,—captains who gladly become preceptors as well as employers of the respectable, well-behaved boys placed under them. But these are nearly always in requisition by personal friends, and do not often have a vacancy for the son of a stranger.

Aside from the indisputable fact that a "greenhorn" is not considered a desirable addition to a crew, a boy should not be sent from home to sea without some preliminary training, and that is offered by the New York Nautical School on board

the "St. Mary's," of which we have deferred mention until now, because it is the final resort of many parents who are perplexed by this troublesome young fellow who wants to be a sailor. The "St. Mary's" is a United States vessel, loaned by the Government to the New York Board of Education, by whom a school is maintained for the education of young men who desire to serve in the merchant navy. The training is excellent, the expenses are small, and the regulations are not severe. It is simply required that candidates shall evince a positive inclination and aptitude for sea life; that they shall not be under fifteen years of age, and that they shall be in robust health. The course lasts two years, and includes reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, grammar and history, navigation, and all the duties of a seaman, such as boxing the compass, knotting and splicing, the strapping of blocks, reefing and furling, heaving the lead, using the palm and needle, the handling of boats, swimming, and the various other accomplishments that are looked for in every thorough Jack Tar. During the winter months, the ship is stationed at the foot of East Twenty-third street, and the boys whose friends or relatives reside in the city are allowed to spend Saturday afternoon and Sunday ashore. During the summer, she makes pleasant little cruises, which are invaluable in enabling the boys to see the practical application of what they have learned in their classes. Holidays lasting several weeks are granted at Christmas, and though the course takes two years, a boy can retire at any time he chooses within the first year. By graduation, however, he secures a certificate that will obtain a berth for him in almost any ship, English or American, and as a committee of the Chamber of Commerce, including the largest ship-owners of the port, coöperate with the Board of Education in the management of the school, he has every opportunity of demonstrating his proficiency to its members and obtaining employment through them.

The expenses are trifling, as we have said, for the only outfit necessary is such as nearly every one possesses,—strong boots, woolen underwear, a blue overcoat, and toilet



materials being essential. The ship supplies two suits of uniform, a cap, a hammock, bedding, etc., to each boy, for which thirty-seven dollars are charged, and if at the end of the first year he is willing to bind himself for the second, the thirty-seven dollars are placed to his credit, so that this amount covers the entire cost of the two years' training, excepting that of the renewal of boots and underclothing, and pocket-money.

The boys of the "St. Mary's" belong to a respectable class, and a good moral tone prevails among them. The commander is a graduate of, and was formerly an instructor at, Annapolis, and all the officers bear commissions in the United States Navy. The government of the school seems to combine discipline with reasonable forbearance, and I advise all parents who have a salt-water sprite of a son to consult with Captain R. L. Phythian, U. S. N., ship "St. Mary's," New York City.

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### *THE GAMES OF CHILDREN AND THE GAMBLING OF MEN.*

AS our elderly and middle-aged readers recall their childhood, they can remember but few games of chance or skill that were considered legitimate to the family, and these were such games as "Checkers," "Fox and Geese," and "Twelve-men Morris," played with red and yellow kernels of corn on designs scratched on the opposite sides of a plain pine board. The various games of cards were generally considered contraband, and hence had wonderful charms for the boys, who keenly enjoyed the stolen fruit in back garrets, woodsheds, and hay-mows. In the youthful days of the younger of our adult readers, the games of "Dr. Busby," and the "Mansion of Happiness," were added to the list recognized by the heads of most families, and we well remember our doubts concerning the propriety of reporting at home

the fact that we had been exceedingly fascinated with the game of "Dr. Busby," at the house of a playmate, and also our happiness when the game, after becoming a little known in the neighborhood, was introduced to our fireside by parents who had the good sense to believe in making home pleasant to the youngsters.

From these simple beginnings a few other games came into general use, and parents began to learn that it was not beneath their dignity to devote a part of their evenings to making home interesting and attractive to the children.

The word "games" is at present used to denote a wide range of amusements and recreations adapted to the home circle, such as charades, parlor magic, fortunes, wax figures, pantomimes, etc., as well as games of chance and skill played with various kinds of cards, or on boards with dice and men, all of which, we believe, are each year becoming more popular in American homes.

But while this is so, we would not have a parent forget for a moment that the line should be drawn between innocent home amusements and what we understand as gambling. Many are unable to see where this line is and in what it consists, and while they admit the necessity of making home the most attractive place to the children, argue that games played at home in childhood tend to gambling in manhood. This is not so; it is the use of the game that decides which side of the line it must be placed. That delight of every boy, the game of marbles, is as innocent as any other childish recreation, and yet many boys have received their first lessons in gambling when playing marbles for *gains*, and many parents have allowed their sons to count over the contents of their marble-bags at night in their presence, who would have held up their hands in holy horror at a game of "Bésique" around the evening lamp. Here is just the line we would draw. Never countenance any game played for a permanent gain, or in which money or its equivalent is the object played for.

That this must be the one and only distinction between innocent recreation and harmful gambling must be seen from

the fact that the simplest recreation or amusement of chance or skill may be used for gambling purposes, and hence no dividing line can be drawn between two games unless, indeed, one of them involves vicious habits or practices in itself. But if all games are made simply matters of amusement, it is not likely that those boys who stay at home in the evening to play them with their parents and sisters will be attracted in their manhood by the temptations of the gaming-tables. On the other hand, a boy who has been encouraged to be proud of his constantly increasing bag of marbles, as the reward of his shrewdness and skill in playing, will be apt enough to consider it legitimate in after years to keep his purse filled in the same manner, although ivory balls and pieces of card be substituted for the marbles. It is a matter of satisfaction to all who have given the subject thought, that innocent games and home amusements are fast becoming a prominent feature in our homes, thereby establishing counter-attractions to those of the saloons and haunts of vice that crowd so closely to our doors, not only in the larger cities but in every country village in the land.

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### SCHOOL LUNCHEONS.

IT is a fact which is worth the attention of all, that a good Boston school lately took occasion, in its annual catalogue, to say that its pupils suffer more from want of nourishing food than from all other matters combined that come into the school-hours. They add: "It is of little use to arrange for varied lessons, frequent change of position, softened light, proper attitude, and pure air, if health is constantly undermined by inattention to food." Do you not see that it is time for school-girls and school-boys to take the matter into consideration? Talk it over with your parents, young friends, and beg them to have the fortitude to withstand you when you coax them for *méringues* and mince-pies.

Pies are popular, I know; but they form a bad diet for children to study on, especially mince-pies, which, I think, almost all of you would select as your favorite. The lard and butter and heavy sweetness of them have the inevitable effect to make little brains sluggish and dull. Sums wont add up and States wont "bound"; heads ache and eyes droop, and that "horrid" geography gets the blame, or the "old arithmetic," instead of the real culprit, pie! Do notice how you feel after eating pie, and I think you will agree with me about this.

I wish, too, that more of you fancied brown bread—Graham or rye. It is very sound and wholesome, and has a great deal more nourishment in it than white bread, and this is an important point for you who have to grow as well as to live. On the other hand, I am glad that almost all of you enjoy fresh fruit. That is nature's own food, and if ripe and perfect, it is good for every one. But I am afraid some of you take nothing to school but cake, candy, turn-overs, or doughnuts, with perhaps a few pickles.

Perhaps some of you will be puzzled to understand why such luncheons as these are improper or insufficient, and I must not feel surprised if you are so. Many grown people go through their lives in complete ignorance of the qualities and objects of food, and of its effect on the growth and health of the human body. They fancy if things have an agreeable taste, that is enough; but a pleasant taste, though desirable, is not enough; for so soon as food has made its way down the throat, its flavor becomes a matter of little consequence. A host of tiny forces wait at the bottom of the passage down which luncheons and dinners go, whose office is to receive what we eat, work it over, distribute, and make it of use to our bodies. There they stand at the foot of the long staircase,—these small servants,—and when a mouthful of bread or of beef descends, they pounce upon it, divide it, and carry it off to where it is needed. Some of it goes to the bones, some to the brain or to the nerves. This is turned to muscle,—that to fat; the little servants understand their work, and so long as



we treat them well, there is no danger that they will waste or misapply anything intrusted to them.

But how few of us always treat them well! We grow careless or hurried, and forget all about the good little servants. We pay no attention to their calls, let them stand waiting for the food till they are faint and discouraged, and then of a sudden we fling a heavy meal down on their hands. Or we do just the other thing, and keep them busy all the time without any rest at all, till they are worn out. Then the little servants grow confused and angry, and run blindly about, putting things in wrong places; or they sulk, and refuse to work,—and *then* we don't feel well, and "can't imagine" what is the reason; or we fall ill, and have a bad time of it till they choose to make up the quarrel and forgive us.

I am afraid that girl did not "feel well" of whom I heard, whose luncheon consisted of six pickles, six pieces of bread and butter, and a bottle of strong tea! And what *do* you suppose these little servants thought of these other girls who take to school "cake, pie (usually mince), turn-overs, tarts, plum-cake, cheese, sticky bits of half-done molasses candy, gum-drops, French chocolate, and hot, greasy doughnuts?" Out of this list, only the cakes, pie, and cheese have *any* proper nourishment in them, you observe, and that of a rich, indigestible sort, which the little servants will worry over and not know quite what to do with. The rest is sheer refuse; they will cast it aside contemptuously, and it will be in the way of their work just so long as it lies there. Or if, in despair, they try to use it, it is sure to do harm. Every part of the girl cries out at having such stuff administered to it. Her head aches, her eyes ache, her skin feels feverish, her whole system is loaded and oppressed. She goes home at night with the fatal basket empty in her hands, and feels that the day has been a bad one, and that life generally is hard. Her spirits are low,—spirits always are low after such a meal,—nobody seems kind,—nothing pleasant. Very likely she ends with a nightmare. And all this discomfort to pay for the brief pleasure of twenty minutes' gormandizing!

Is it worth while? I don't believe any of you will say that it is.

I should think a sort of coöperative luncheon might prove a good idea for some of you. Suppose, for instance, that six girls agreed to arrange their lunch on this principle,—one carrying bread nicely sliced and buttered, one some cold chicken, one a few hard-boiled eggs, with a paper of salt, one a square of fresh ginger-bread; another a jar of stewed fruit, with a spoon and some milk-biscuit, and the last a supply of apples or oranges. You see what a substantial and varied luncheon they would have, and yet each mamma would have less trouble than in providing a little of several things for her special child to carry. It might be worth while for some painstaking mothers to try this plan.

There is one thing which is not always considered, and that is, the importance of making a child's school-dinner look attractive. There is something very dampening to the appetite in the aspect of thick bread and butter rolled in a bit of coarse brown paper, with a cooky or two sticking to the parcel, and an apple covered with crumbs in the bottom of the pail! Such a luncheon often will prevent a delicate child from eating at all. A little care spent in preparation—in cutting the bread trimly and neatly, packing the cake in white paper, and the whole in a fresh napkin, in choosing a pretty basket to take the place of the tin pail—is not pains thrown away. Some children are born fastidious, and with a distaste for food. They require to be tempted to eat at all—tempted, not by unwholesome goodies, but by taking trouble to make simple things dainty and attractive to them. We have heard a grown woman, whose fastidiousness had survived her childhood, describe with a shudder the effect which her dinner-basket at school had upon her. The very sight of it took away all appetite, and she went through the afternoon faint and fasting rather than meddle with its contents. Do what is possible to give the luncheon an appetizing appearance to the little people who depend upon it for the working force of their long school-day.

*THE SCHOOL-GIRLS' MEALS.*

THE physical education of school-girls is now receiving so much attention that it seems in place to ask the attention of mothers to the bad habits in eating into which a girl who attends a daily school is very apt to be driven. A girl who is growing, who studies hard, and who has all sorts of demands made upon her time, brain, and health, certainly needs sound sleep and plenty of nourishing food. The sleep she may get, for nature is likely to have some influence in this connection, but the majority of these girls get as little comfort from their meals as is possible. They are not apt to rise early unless it is to gain time for study or practice, and they hurry through their breakfasts, nervous for fear they will be late, and perhaps anxious about their lessons. Before the rest of the family has come to the second cup of coffee, the girls have finished their meal and probably are off to school.

They carry with them a lunch that is rarely tempting, but still more seldom nourishing, and this scanty, ill-digested breakfast, supplemented by the luncheon of bread and cake, must support them through all the morning hours of constant work. If the family has dined in the middle of the day, the girl's dinner has been saved in the oven, and is put down before her on a corner of the dining-table, where it looks anything but inviting. She is probably tired or excited,—for the average school-girl alternates between these conditions,—and she is not tempted to do more than hungrily satisfy her appetite, or wearily turn from the half-dried meal. If the dinner hour comes later in the day, she possibly studies her next day's lesson while waiting for her meal, and finds it hard to fix her mind upon her book. If dinner were ready, she fancies the lessons would not seem so complex, and as fasting rarely clears the mind of any one less saintly than a monk, she is right. After dinner, however, matters are not much mended, for then she finds herself growing sleepy, and the bed is the object of desire. That she is undergoing a slow process of starvation does not occur to the mother, who watches her with

anxiety, and who prohibits parties and long walks and late hours. The doctor orders iron to give tone and appetite, when he had better order time and tempting, nourishing food.

The boarding-school girl, in spite of the grumbling about the table, is often better off, in this respect, than the daughter at home, for eating, at school, is regarded as one of the duties of the day, and it is attended to with some degree of order and leisure. We commend this subject to mothers for attention, and it might be suggested to doctors who are asked to help the daughter to better health, that they sometimes should prescribe plenty of good food and plenty of time for eating and digesting it.

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### *A WORD TO THE WISE.*

IT is worth while to think, sometimes, that in making a child happy you are not only working for the present moment, but are helping to store up pleasant memories which shall brighten the days of care and darkness which the future will surely bring.

Let your children have pets if they are willing to take good care of them, not grudgingly nor of necessity, but with that sympathetic kindness which shows the true mother-love.

If you happen to be one of those unfortunate people who dislike animals, it will require self-denial and patience on your part, but it will be worth while to make the effort. Remember, you are cultivating the finest qualities of your children. Your boys and girls will grow more gentle, and thoughtful, and unselfish, and their love for their pets will strengthen the ties which bind them to their home and to each other.

Never mind if the dog does leave muddy foot-prints on the sofa, and the kitten pulls off the pillow-shams, and the rabbit nips the buds from your flower-bed; the remembrance of an indulgent home, brightened by the love of these dumb friends,



will be worth more to your children in after years than all your orderly house and flourishing garden.

Your birds will be flown before long, and you will not mind, then, if the empty nest has lost some of its first freshness.

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### THE BOY JOHN.

BACK under the shadows of that time when man was pawing himself loose from monkey realm, unsophisticated wisdom would have it that John should be trained up in the way he ought to go. We, of course, know better. In that twilight period of no steam-boats, no female suffrage, no reforms, no town-meetings, no beer-gardens, how should they understand; but in these happier days, when every boy can explore the mysteries of a normal school or drinking-cellar, Solomon's wisdom with respect to the very trifling matter of John's education will hardly do.

Solomon built a house. But who now would build after that old Hebrew's drafting? Do we not have modern improvements? And so should not the boy John have the benefit of modern improvements? In old time it was, "Train up a child in the way he should go," on the ground that being trained in it he would be likely to stick to it.

But in this riper age we have a deeper philosophy: "Let nature alone to work out its own way; do not restrain it." We have learned that pent-up things, such as steam and reforms, are dangerous. They should be allowed to blow off. And so the child has a steam which he should blow off. He has fires of youth which ought to be burned out, and not smothered to char on his life. Having a wayward disposition incident to youth, he should be suffered to work it off and be rid of it, so as to settle down gracefully into sober manhood.

John is an awkward, restless, fidgety fellow, whose chief end is to torture the cat and tear clothes. His parents con-

gratulate themselves that their boy is growing up under the hallowed influences of a Christian home. What is it, then, that marks John's home as hallowed and Christian? When the toil and drive of the day are ended, and the evening hours begin to throw their hush over the household, what is there in living-room or parlor, got ready by a parent's Christian thoughtfulness, for making the closing hours of day the happy, the joyous, the loved ones of all the twenty-four? John has been in for dinner, eaten it, and gone out again. He has been in for his supper, eaten that, and now, after doing the last things of work-time (for John happens very often to be a boy who knows what work is), he comes in weary in body, yet uneasy in mind, restless, yearning for something;—some recreation, some joy, some sport, some play, laugh, frolic, unbending of some kind to relieve the hideous tedium of all tread, tread, tread in the mill of toil. The mother, having put her house in order for the night, takes some odd piece of work—sewing, knitting, or crocheting—and worries out the fag-ends of weary flesh and lamp-light. The father takes his evening paper, or his evening drowse, or both of them, rolling in an easy-chair, or tipped up in one that is not easy,—himself silent, dull, dismal.

But the boy John,—what of him? What shall he do? He does not know how to knit or crochet; he does not care for the newspaper. What are politics, and Congress, and Tammany to him? What fun for him in Beecher's sermon or the Farmers' Club? He looks up and around. Not an eye or countenance shows one ray of sympathy with his uneasiness, pitching and rolling now to the brim. He looks up on the mantel; nothing there. He looks up to the clock; nothing there. He looks around on the walls, up at the ceiling; nothing for him there. He looks out of the window: well, he begins to see the glimmer of something for him out there; though nothing under that roof, within those walls, around that stove, which the world calls his home. So John yields up a sigh, a stretch, and a yawn, and out he goes for sympathy into the darkness. The mother works on. The father reads

and dozes on. The boy is now beginning to *go* on in the way he likes to go. Other boys fleeing out from other such Christian homes, or from homes that are not Christian, meet him on the street. They mingle their discontents and sympathies till, with the leap and dash of young life, they come together into a plot for mischief, or into the chamber where billiards are played, or into the cellar where entertainment is for man and — *beast*; or anywhere up or down where life and unbending for the restless fibers of youth can be found, and where the evening hours are not spent in the dullness of knitting and dozing.

John is young. His tastes are unformed. His feelings are very far from being refined. In fact, he is a little gross in his sympathies. He wants amusement. Every bone in his body aches for recreation, for play, fun, laughter. He does not care—he has never been taught to care—what the fun is, if only it will give relief to the fidget that stings him. Not at all refined, he will go for what he wants where others go. And going where others go, he finds the hunger of his nature coarsely met—just as tainted meat will fill the hunger of a starving man—in the low revelry, vile stories, unclean mirth of drinking-cellars and saloons. The boy does not discriminate very closely, and to the longing of his crude appetite the entertainment of these places is infinitely better than any he ever could find in that place which he has been taught to speak of as home. For eating, and sleeping, and getting his clothes mended, he feels that no place can be equal to a Christian home; but for a good time, for passing a dull evening hour, for learning something new, for words of cheer, for professions of sympathy, for those genial ways which a boy does love, and which any boy but a Uriah Heep must love, John will tell even the minister to his face that home is nothing to a street corner, or a billiard-room with the attachment of a beer-shop.

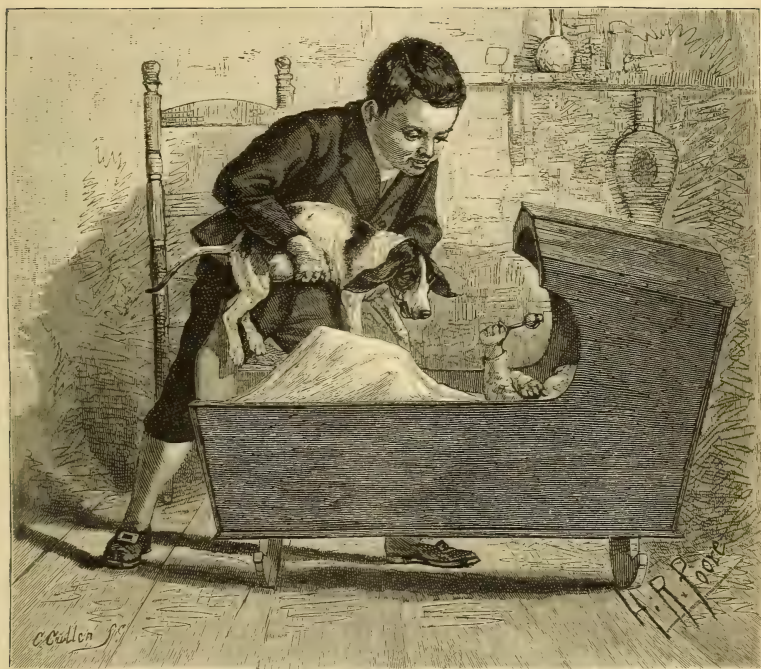
Well, by and by, just before the clock strikes ten, the father wakes from his doze, the spectacles falling and the paper sliding upon the floor, and, looking around with a bewildered gaze, asks, "Where is John?"

Where is he? Why, for want of better instruction, he is out practicing our modern plan of training himself up in the way he likes to go, having no thought that when he is old he will care to depart from it. But the father who has inquired for his boy rubs his eyes, looks out into the darkness, and listens; but he hears him not. He wishes that his boy would not go out so of nights; but then he does go out. He wonders that John cannot sit down at home like other boys. What other boys? And then, with a *very* feeling remark that "if John does not do better and become steady, he will make a miserable shirk of himself," the father goes to bed. The mother waits till her boy comes. By and by he does come in,—his restlessness blown off, the uneasy fidget of the early evening spent in relaxations which, of some kind, a boy must have,—and then at last the house is quiet. Sleep and rest prepare the household for another day and evening like these.

And when that other evening comes, out goes the boy again; and the father again wonders, and wishes that John would be steady and stay at home, and very feelingly predicts that "if he does not change his course, he will very likely come to a miserable end."

But, good father, why should your boy spend his evenings at home? What is there at home for *him*? What pleasant recreation, what happy plan for whiling away the hour, does he find inviting him *there*, or that would invite any *boy* there? What have you done to make home attractive and winsome to him as *John's* home? He would like amusements suited to his young, restless, brimming nature; how much real thought and care did you ever give in schemes, devices, plans, efforts, with a view to meeting this passionate yearning of his mind? How much do you play with him, tell stories with him, make riddles with him, talk with him of what you have done and seen, of what your father did and saw? What games, what sports, what efforts at skill with slate and pencil, with knife, saw, and gimlet, have you devised for him, while your look and action were saying, "My boy, I want you to love your home more than any other spot on earth"?





HOW JOHNNY AMUSED THE BABY.



But your boy is not all for sport, though in this evening hour he does want a change from the employments of the day. His eager mind is ever on the alert to learn something, and if his mind is guided, he will take as much pleasure in the acquisition of useful knowledge as in that which is frivolous; he will quite as easily be led to the reading of good as to the reading of trash. Now, among the book-shelves of the old house, how many shelves have you filled for your boy? What books do fill them? You buy,—for you are the father, or perhaps the kindred of that father I had a talk with a few weeks ago,—you buy for your own use the “Almanac,” “The Gazetteer,” the “Lives of the Apostles,” “Scott’s Commentary,” “Emblems of Faith,” a “History of the War,” “Martin F. Tupper,” the “Speeches of Henry Clay,” and a picture of Lincoln. But what for your boy? You spend eight dollars a year for your daily paper, which you go to sleep over evenings; as many dollars spent in suitable reading for him, in each of the five years past, would have given him a stock now which he would read and read over again through the twilights of summer and long evenings of winter. But, mind you, it must be suitable reading. Of the books mentioned above, you yourself do not read one, beside the “Almanac” and “Scott’s Commentary.” And most certainly you do not expect your boy to read them. Here, then, are a dozen or fifteen dollars wasted. And just in the same manner you can fling away money in buying books for John—books which he will not read and which no boy will read. Books there are, more than a father will wish to buy in one year, which any boy, quick, active, hungering, restless as yours is, will sit down and read by the hour; and as he reads will loathe himself more and more at remembering that he ever cared to look into those places where man and beast are (or perhaps in strict grammar I should say *is*) entertained.

You sigh, do you? And you answer, “All this sounds very well; but to carry out such a plan would cost something.” Indeed, so it would. I did not think of that. Yet it is a matter that should be thought of. Let us look at it. Do

you make use of tobacco? Pardon me, I mean no offense. Christian fathers do sometimes make use of it. Suppose, then, *you* do. How much does it cost you? Ten cents a day? Too much? Then say (for I will take no advantage) five cents a day. I think you would rather have it ten cents: for five leaves me to infer that you smoke very poor cigars. However, we will stick to five. But five cents a day would be eighteen dollars and twenty-five cents a year. Eighteen dollars and twenty-five cents every year (except leap year, when you would put in one more cigar, and which, for the fun of the thing, you perhaps would pay ten cents for)—eighteen dollars and twenty-five cents every year turned into smoke! And you cannot afford to buy ten dollars' worth of books in a year for your boy!

"But I do not use tobacco, the vile stuff," you may possibly answer. And it is no conclusive mark against one's Christian character not to use it; though you need not speak disrespectfully of that which is the "sweet morsel" of so many a Christian. You do not use it, then. But your neighbor does. "My neighbor—what have I to do with my neighbor in the matter?" Don't be impatient; just hear me a moment. Your neighbor does use tobacco, if you do not. Now, if he can afford to burn up five or ten cents every day, twenty or forty dollars every year, of his income, and have nothing for it, how is it that you cannot afford to spend half as much money, and have a *boy* for it at home happy, contented, and training up in the way he should go? Is the delicacy of tobacco so priceless to your neighbor, and is a good, home-loving boy of so little worth to you? I know you do not think so. You love John, and will do anything for him.

Training up a child in the way he should walk unto the end,—the wisdom of an old foggy three thousand years ago,—is very much despised in this advanced age. Many a Christian parent has a way of flinging this drudgery off from his own conscience upon the conscience of a charitable public. The family is not the school of moral and religious training it ought to be. The evening hours for home enjoyment and the Sab-



bath for culture are not given, it may be feared, as they should be by Christian parents. Our Sunday-schools, with all their boast of good (and they boast not in vain), have encouraged an infinite evil in just this direction. The father is weary with the toil of the week, and so, instead of training his child himself, he sends the boy, or the girl, to the Sunday-school, trusting (as if he had lost his wits) that the dear public will feel as much interest in his child as he ought to feel.

But this boy that we have been talking about (I feel a good deal of interest in John)—let us follow him a little longer. Neglected by father and mother,—to be sure, his father sends him to school and his mother mends his clothes,—with no home bright, sunny, made cheerful, happy, attractive for him, he is out on the street; in saloons and cellars at last he is—in fact, he is in any place where his brimming nature can flow over, and the uneasy, restless activities of his soul can spend themselves. He quickly feels the contrast between these places and his home. At home, the care of father and mother has been given to provide him the accommodations for eating and sleeping; and John goes there to eat and sleep. Beyond these they have scarcely troubled themselves about any other wants their boy might have. They have seemed to feel that he could hardly want anything more. Yet John does want something more. He has looked the house all over to find it; but it is not there. So he goes out to seek it elsewhere. Genial companionship, amusement, recreations for the coil and spring of his boyish mettle, he does not find where his father and mother are; but he does find them where other homeless boys gather and homeless men are found,—where the story, the joke, the game, mirth, and drinking fill up the hours of evening.

After this training has been going on till the boy has got a fair start down that way he will be likely to go, the father one day rubs open his eyes to the real state of the case. He begins to feel troubled. He is really alarmed. He wonders why it is that John will act so. He inquires of himself what can be done, assuming himself that *he* has done everything

which a father can do for a loved son,—“for have I not clothed my boy, and found him a comfortable home to sleep in?”—he gives him up; what else can the poor father do?—he gives his boy up to the keeping of public benevolence. “I have done all I can do; my conscience is clear. Now,” he says to public charity, “look out for your conscience.” And so temperance organizations, Good Templars, Knights of What-not, take the boy into their keeping and do what they can for him. The father is easy again. He takes his evening paper, reads, and goes to sleep; for his boy—“is he not safe in the hands of public keeping?” Safe? *Is* he safe? Can you sleep on now and take your rest? Good Templars and such things, devised to pick up the homeless, are not quite so sure as—as—well, as the laws of Nature, the rising and setting of the sun. Divisions and lodges of temperance may be faithful a thousand years or so; but then the sun has been doing his work faithfully six times as long.

After a period of years I come back where the home of this family is of which John is so important a member, and look in upon them once more. As only the last week I looked into some of those families that I knew long time ago, and learned with heart-ache of their Johns, so I come back to this family and inquire about its John. The father and mother, with a lurid smile, yet with a warm grasp of the hand, welcome me. We sit down, and soon the talk wanders back into the past. God has been kind to them, though the burden of years begins to be heavy upon them. Their work will soon be done. They are finishing up the day’s labor, and getting ready for the long evening and the final sleep. I look about me and remember. I turn to the mother, and with a cheery voice break in, “And what has become of—of John, that I used to see?”

The mother drops her hands. Her work falls to the floor. She turns away her eyes. She cannot answer. In the mean time, the father has slowly risen from his seat, and, as if to do some forgotten thing, has gone out. In a minute I follow him. I find him with downcast look, hands clasped behind

him, pacing to and fro on the greensward by the door. We sit down under a maple, through which the full moon is shaking her beams upon us, and there he tells me of John. "I hoped well for my boy. I did what I could for him. He was my all. But he would not stay at home like a steady boy. He spent his evenings abroad. Bad boys and worse men led him away. He learned to go with them that have done him no good. Not that John was naturally vicious: before he went with bad men he was a good boy. He learned it all. He began to drink—at first because others did. Soon he loved it; and ——. I cannot go over these sad years. You can think how it has been. My boy—is—lost—to me; but if —through the infinite—mercy of God—he might not be lost to heaven ——. Oh, the burden of my heart is greater than I can bear! If I could think of him in his childhood innocence and purity as safe under the sod, I should have some comfort in that. But there is not much comfort for me now. The staff that I leaned upon has broken and pierced my side. I can only think of him now, and say, 'John, my boy, you do not mean to kill your father; you know not what you do; you do not think how you are crushing me down to the grave.' But enough of this. Let us go in."

In the house we do not talk much. We are not in the mood for it now. The current has been broken, and no one feels like trying to restore it. After a little while I bid the father and mother good-night, and go away. At the end of the gravel walk in the road I stop and look back to the lighted windows. It is the last look that I shall ever give them, very likely. My thought is, "Good father, you never had a home yourself, perhaps, and so you knew not what such a thing would be for a boy like John of years ago. You did not know how you could make your boy love it forever as his dear old home. You had not learned how to wind the love of it into his heart. And you did not think how there might be memories of it that would make him die rather than cast a shadow on its hallowed sunshine."

*THE USES OF CHANGE.*

THERE are one or two mistakes in the management of house and children which are oftenest made in notably "well-ordered Christian families," especially in those living in the country, or in quiet inland towns, where they are exposed to little friction with the outside world. The first is a hatred of change. The Squire and his wife married late, perhaps ; but, in any case, have hardened and settled down into certain admirable habits before the young people arrive at their teens. They cannot understand why these old ways should not be always admirable ; nor why, when the old ways are suited to their own middle-age, like any well-woven, comfortable garment, they are heavy iron yokes and bonds to uproarious Tom, and even to gentle Susy. For example, the same dishes appear on the table the year round ; mother cannot guess why father and the boys relish even an ill-cooked meal away from home, and have no appetite for the everlasting beef and apple-pie, or mutton hash, which she gives them from January until December. She is her own seamstress, too, most probably, and cuts and trims the girls' dresses and boys' coats after some occult designs of her own. The more devout she is, or separated by high thoughts or past sorrows from worldly affairs, the more trivial do such matters appear to her, and the less likely is she to sympathize with Jenny's pangs as the girls giggle at her queer polonaise, or Ted's rage of mortification as the boys pursue him with yells of "Shoot the hat!"

We should live above our clothes or food, she wisely says, not seeing that she is willfully making clothes and food the objects of importance and perpetual uneasy anxiety to her children. She is slow, too, to perceive any necessity for change in her habits of visiting or receiving visits. Jenny and Ted yawn through the monthly sewing-circle, or the tea-drinkings, where the doctrine of election, or the iniquities of ancient popes, are freely discussed ; but it is a long time before their mother yields to their demand for tea-drinkings or circles of their own. It seldom occurs, too, to this class of parents that



the minds of their children require absolute change of place, range of thought, and companions. Travel is the very last way in which the average farmer will spend money for his family. If somebody has to go to the county town to invest his savings, or sell his wheat, and his oldest son can be trusted, well and good; that is enough "outing" for the boy, and the old man prefers to sit in his own chimney-corner, and wants no wider view than his own fields. If he were told that the fire-side, from sheer monotony, had become hateful to his children, and the home-hills an intolerable wall which barred them from the unknown world, he would declare them either insane or under the dominion of the devil. The boys usually manage to find their way out to the world; but unless the girls marry, they are stranded on the barren beach of home. Nobody who does not know what life is in this class of farm or village houses can imagine how barren a home may be.

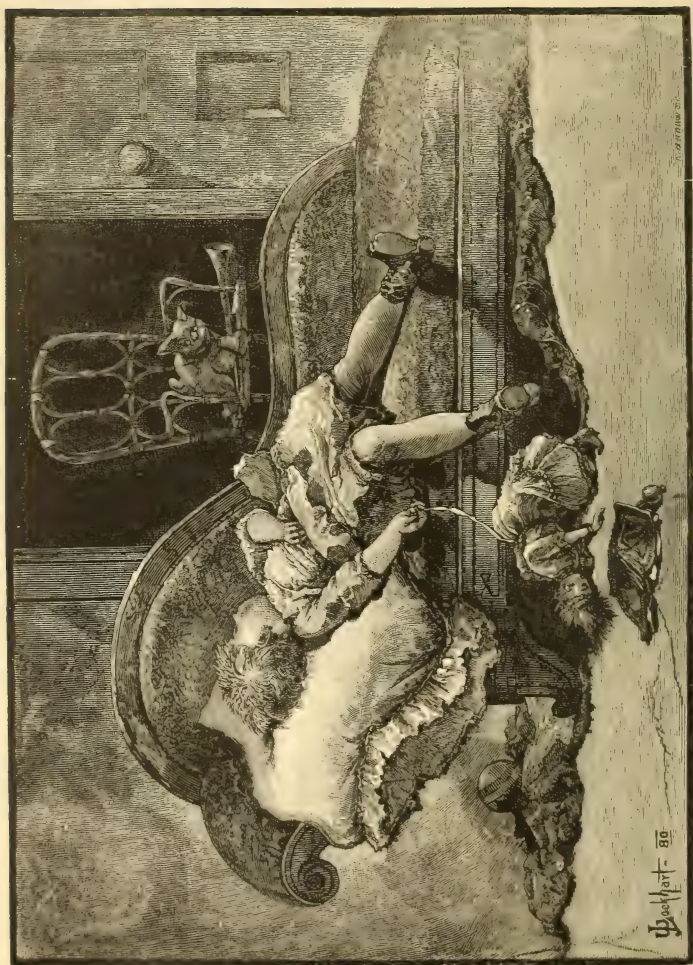
There are at this day thousands of single, middle-aged women in the West or South to whom the sea or mountains, or the sea-board cities, are as vague and desirable objects of longing as heaven itself. They live with their mothers, perhaps, who are affectionate and tender, but who never guessed at the restless discontent which might have been satisfied by a few short, inexpensive journeys. It would be worth while for every mother to consider whether much of the irritability, the crossness, the languor of body and soul, which she complains of in herself and her children, is not due simply to the monotony of home, and whether it would not be wise to cut down the outlay on dress and food and spend the money in car-fare. There is no such educator as travel, no such medicine for nervous diseases, and no speedier way to quiet that restless, vagabond blood which every observant mother has discovered in both her boys and girls.

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*THE CHILDREN'S HOUR.*

WHILE we talk to the house-mother (and the name ought to suit the dainty matron on Murray Hill, or the Ohio farmer's wife, as well as it did Griselda) about giving an hour every morning to ordering and righting the details of comfort in her household, we must put in a claim on behalf of the children for an hour in the evening. Of course, every mother cries out that she gives her life to her children; they are on her mind night and day—she thinks, plans, works for them constantly. All very probably true, and yet the children may scarcely know their mother, or feel that they individually have any share in her. The more a woman actually works for her children, cooks, sews, or perhaps earns money for them, the less likely is she to sit down with her hands folded to talk to them, to listen to their little secrets and stories about the teacher and the school-boys, to get into the very heart of their fancies and foolish plans and hopes. We insist upon the hour which shall be absolutely the children's, no matter what work or social claim must be put aside for it. Let any woman quietly reckon over the minutes of the day when she is her children's companion—not nurse, nor seamstress, nor instructor—and she will be startled into confessing that our plan is more needed than she thought. By the time their school-hours and the necessary household occupations, and the time for meals, visits, and visitors, are subtracted, there is usually not a moment when the little creatures can feel that their mother is altogether their own. Especially is this true in city life, where nurses and governesses come in between them, and cannot well be put aside. Even in the evening, at the hour when almost every mother loves to hang over her baby and sing it to sleep, Tom and Jenny, grown out of babyhood, are sent off to their lessons, and presently creep sleepily to bed, left to think their own thoughts as they go. Now, suppose every mother who reads this page should, for a month or two as a trial, set apart that lonesome evening hour as the children's. What if she does give up the opera or agree-





A TIRED MOTHER.



able guests in the parlor? There are higher duties required of her than the study of Offenbach or hospitality. Let her leave her sewing behind; don't let her dress be too fine for Nelly to maul and climb over, nor her thoughts busy with anything but the children's talk. Silly as that may be, they are the keenest of observers; they will know instantly whether it is only mamma's body that is with them while her mind is far away, or whether she herself is as much in earnest, as eager to talk and to listen, as she is with grown people and strangers.

Nor need she fill up the hour with hints on behavior or morals; put off reproofs until to-morrow; let them slaughter their tenses or tell of their school-scrapes as they choose,—for this little while she is their friend—comes near to them. We know of one house where a poor seamstress puts by her machine every evening to play blind-man's buff or marbles with her boys,—“It will count for more than money,” she says; and another where two bearded young fellows at nine o'clock eagerly clear away their Virgils and maps for “mother's talk,” and think it the best hour of the whole day.

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### *SOME POPULAR MISTAKES.*

A GOOD many years ago, Lamb contended unsuccessfully with an obstinate public on certain universal fallacies; but the mistakes to which we call attention to-day belong especially to mothers and housekeepers—a class proverbially open to reason:

*First.* That early to bed and early to rise in all cases will make a man healthier, richer, or wiser than his neighbors. In the country, where the morning air is pure, and the day's work is manual work, the adage holds good. It is certainly advisable to get the bulk of the job for the day, whether that be

plowing, washing, or churning, over in the soft, dewy hours of early morning, and leave for the sultry noon the lighter in-doors work. Besides, the heavy meal of the day on a farm is usually eaten before one o'clock, and the light tea is digested before nine, the usual hour of retiring. But all this is no reason why the virtuous farm-wife, going to sleep with her chickens, should sniff with pious contempt at city folk, "who turn night into day." The professional man in the cities cannot begin his business until the customary hour of nine o'clock, nor end it, in order to dine with his family, until five or six. After the day's drudgery and this heavy meal, the brain-worker requires not fresh air nor sleep so much as relaxation, change of idea, use for the faculties of mind not brought into play in his business. Two or three hours of "the inspiration of the candle" renews and rests the strained brain, and fits it for the healing touch of sleep. Children, of course, who dine, as do country folk, at noon, should be sent to bed, or rather be taken there by their mothers, early in the evening. It is better for them to be sound asleep under the blankets, and certainly better for both mother and nurse to have a few hours of quiet and respite. Grown people have their rights as well as little ones. The children (if their bedroom is properly ventilated) will be up quite early enough in the morning; but they should *not* be sent out for a walk until they have had breakfast and the fogs have lifted. It may be very well for dwellers in the country to brush the dew from off the upland lawn; but those who brush the dew from city pavements will be very likely to bring home diphtheria and malaria with them.

*Second.* It is a favorite maxim with city mothers that children are warmer-blooded, and need less clothing, than adults. Especially is this held true of babies and girls. Boys are warmly protected by cloth leggins, kilt suits, and stout shoes, while their little sisters defy the winter wind in bare knees and embroidered skirts. There is a poetic fancy, too, that girls should be kept in white up to a certain age. A dozen little girls, of from three to five, were assembled the other day, and the universal dress was an undervest and drawers of merino, a

single embroidered flannel petticoat, and an incumbent airy mass of muslin, ribbons, and lace. Meanwhile, their mothers, women of culture and ordinary intelligence, were wrapped in heavy woollens, silks, and furs. In consequence of this under-dressing, the children are kept housed, except on warm days, or when they are driven out in close carriages, and therefore a chance cold wind brings to these tender hot-house flowers, instead of health, disease and death. It is absolute folly to try to make a child hardy by cruel exposure, or to protect it from croup or pneumonia by a string of amber beads, or by shutting it up in furnace-heated houses. Lay away its muslin frills until June ; put woolen stockings on its legs, flannel (not half-cotton woven vests) on its body, and velvet, silk, merino—whatever you choose, or can afford—on top of that ; tie on a snug little hood, and turn the baby out every winter's day (unless the wind be from the north-east and the air foggy), and before spring its bright eyes and rosy cheeks will give it a different beauty from any pure robes of white.

*Third.* Another scarcely less serious mistake is the theory that the moment ill-temper, natural depravity, original sin, or whatever you choose to call it, appears in a child, it is the parents' duty to apply the rod, or moral suasion,—in short, to “begin its training.” Now, it is a fair rule to start with, that no child under two years, who is perfectly healthy and comfortable, will worry or cry. Colic, or a budding tooth, has much more to do with its temper than Adam, or any spiritual snake. We urge upon the young mother spearmint, coddling, unlimited patience—anything rather than force, moral or physical. Even when the child is older, it is safer to begin the treatment of all attacks of ill-humor or perverseness by inquiring into the state of its digestion. When the mother rises cross and moody, she knows very well it is owing to the late supper last night, or that cup of green tea. There is, luckily, nobody to “apply the rod” in her case, or to throw the blame unjustly on her conscience. Nervousness with a child is almost always a matter of the stomach. A crust of bread will usually put an end to the most obstinate perverse-

ness. Children, for this reason, should never be allowed to go to bed, after a fit of crying, with an empty stomach. A bit of bread and jelly, or a cup of custard, will bring back smiles and happiness when all the moral law fails, and for the soundest of reasons.

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*SHALL WE HAVE A SOCIETY FOR THE  
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY FROM CHILDREN?*

THERE is no denying that in hotels and boarding-houses, cars and steam-boats, street and parlor, children are coming to be dreaded more and more. As a class, their manners are almost universally bad; their voices are appalling; they eat like savages, and, in fact, set at naught all the social amenities.

Who is to blame for this? Certainly not the children. How can you expect a child to eat in a civilized way if it has never been trained to it? We are not so many degrees removed from the aborigines that refinement is always instinctive. It is hardly fair to condemn and dislike a child for monopolizing or interrupting conversation when no education has taught it differently; and why should the ears of the public be deafened by the shrill voices of Young America till such time as it shall learn that all the world does not care to hear its innocent remarks? Why—to be comprehensive—should children, as a rule, be regarded by their parents, friends, and the public generally as a curse instead of a blessing? Simply because the parents do not respect the rights of the public. Let me mention a few instances in my own experience which will recall similar cases to every mind.

Only a few days ago, I went in the cars from No-matter-where to A-place-of-no-consequence. It was a warm, damp, muggy day,—one of those days when dust will stick to the most immaculate, and when eating, except with the most attractive surroundings, is not to be thought of. The cars



were quite full of returning city families, and I did not notice till we had moved from the station that I had placed myself in the seat directly behind a mother and four children, the eldest of whom might be ten and the youngest two. The appearance of the party was not unprepossessing, and for a short time things progressed quietly; but before long the baby became fretful, and finally asked for milk. Now began my trials. A basket of portentous size, which I had not before noticed, was drawn forth from among the family feet, and a bottle and a cup were extracted from it. But what a bottle! What a cup! The first was flat and brown, suggestive of rum, and the latter was silver, with greasy finger-marks upon it. Some milk was poured out and given to the child in a back-handed kind of way, which caused about two-thirds of the liquid to run in streamlets over its clothes, and the remaining portion to go down its throat with a "glug" which meant a choking fit before long. I will not particularize. Handkerchiefs were brought into requisition, thumps on the back administered, and quiet restored, only to be broken by cries from the remaining three for something to eat. A peach was now given to each child, and the juice from the fruit, mingling with the dust which had by this time accumulated on their small faces, soon painted them in colors which memory dreads to recall. The peach refecton was followed by sandwiches. And why will people persist in making sandwiches of a large and substantial slice of ham between two uncertain pieces of bread? Need I tell how the bread vanished, and the ham straggled forth in hopeless strings? Who cannot imagine the greasy shine which surrounded their mouths and glistened on their fingers,—fingers which soon seized on the glasses of the ice-water boy and made you feel that, if you had not had your individual drinking-cup with you, death, in the agonies of thirst, would be preferable to nectar from those tumblers? A damp bread-and-butter smell now pervaded the atmosphere, and from time to time a dive would be made into the depths of the basket, and more peaches, more sandwiches, and then crackers were brought up,—crumbly crackers, crackers which

fell to pieces in unwholesome-looking flakes, and stuck to the children's faces. Then, as if to top the climax, the lunch-basket at last produced molasses cakes—small oblong cakes, so full of the sticky fluid that they seemed perspiring with it; the kind of cake which left its shiny surface in brown patches on faces and fingers till the latter were cleansed—shall I tell it?—by a series of licks—there is no other word. Had I remained in their vicinity longer, I have no doubt that either gingerbread or cream-cakes would have been the next course; but at this point I reached A-place-of-no-consequence, and hastily left. My last view of those children haunts me like a nightmare.

Very much the same thing goes on at hotels. There are few of us who have not sat at the table with children whose food has been put in their mouths *en masse*; children who have reached before and across you for anything and everything they fancied; children who have talked about you and commented on your appearance with perfect freedom; and we exclaim, "What dreadful children!" when we should say, "Wretched parents, so to neglect your duty to the public!"

My friends, the H's, are among the brightest of my acquaintances. They have a charming home, and—four boys. "I used to dine at Sally's every Sunday," said a bachelor brother of the lady; "but, since the boys left the nursery, there's no comfort at the house, so I dine at my club, and drop in after the imps are asleep." Disregarding this dismal view of things, I went one day to dine at Sally's, as her note said, "to meet informally two other friends whose ideas I know will prove congenial." On the occasion specified, I had no opportunity to find out whether they had any ideas or not; and I have since made up my mind that the bachelor uncle was not too severe. Hereafter, when I dine at the H's, may it be "formally." Four well-dressed, bright-looking boys made their appearance as dinner was announced. They scuffled into their seats, and all four immediately entered into a brisk discussion with reference to a pair of rabbits, which lasted through the soup and fish, when a brief respite ensued, owing to their

steady application to roast turkey. During the "cutting up" process, I received numerous thrusts from the elbows of my two vigorous young neighbors, with an occasional splash of gravy by way of variety, or an arm reaching across me to secure some desired article of food which the waiter could not at that moment hand. Conversation among the elder members of the party had hardly begun, when it was interrupted by a question from one boy, which drew forth violent opposition from the other three, and with the exception of "five minutes for refreshments" which the quartette allowed themselves for ice-cream, they kept the ball going till we rose from table. On entering the parlor, the attention of the guests was demanded to decide on the respective merits of two postage-stamp albums, and requests for stamps now poured forth with startling rapidity and perseverance. Eight o'clock came, the nominal bed-time for the two younger torments. They argued and resisted, however, and before the point was settled, the two other guests, who had a second engagement, took their leave. When the boys finally did go to bed, and quiet was restored, Mrs. H. asked me if I thought her boys were worse than other people's. Returning a guarded answer, which I fear was not wholly re-assuring, she said: "I never let them do anything wrong, and, really, if I undertook to discipline those boys with their different natures, it would leave me no time for anything else." I did not argue the matter.

I have about given up going to *matinées*, on account of the immense amount of school-girl gabble to which I am compelled to listen, instead of the entertainment for which I purchased my ticket. If the gabble should stop, it is only to be superseded by munching of candy and suppressed giggling. If girls must go through the vealy age, let them undergo it at home, and not invade the domains of the public.

Let me suggest that if the public met with more consideration, life would be made much more pleasant to children. I know those who never enter a place of amusement except when accompanied by little faces, whose bright eyes fail to see aught but the beautiful. I could tell of many a drive and

picnic postponed till Saturday or vacation gave the children a chance to go. But they were children whose parents recognized the public, and upheld their rights. I could also name several libraries, picture-galleries, greenhouses, and museums, whose treasures never unfold themselves to children, because the little fingers are so rarely taught not to touch. Most children love music. Witness the crowd around a grinding organ, even when unattended by the attractive monkey. Yet, how many children does any one know whom she would risk inviting to a *musical*?

I cannot say I wholly agree with the man who thought a boy should be brought up in a hogshead, and fed through the bung-hole, for I doubt not that on being released the wild ox of the desert would be a more desirable companion; but I do think that parents should so bring up their offspring that no one should have occasion to make the suggestion. Yet many of us feel with and for the sufferer who said his sister followed to the letter one Bible injunction with regard to children, namely: "Forbid them not."

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### DOMESTIC ETHICS.

IT is a sad but a terribly common thing, whether in material or spiritual forces, to waste power. Whatever be true in the physical world, we see this waste going on in moral dynamics every day and all about us. In religious asceticism, for instance, what a wondrous amount of laudable but barren effort, self-denial, perseverance, and all heroic virtues has been laid out by ill-judging saints in denying themselves essentially innocent comforts or pleasures, or forcing themselves to as essentially useless or hurtful practices. The evil is the greater when it attacks our forming period, and perverts not only our habitual actions but the underlying tendencies and mental tone



which shape them. It is of the last importance, in early training, to get all the moral force of the growing character concentrated on vital distinctions and essential rights and wrongs. No energy should be wasted in changing the accommodation power, so to speak, of our mental vision, and magnifying matters of mere convention or accidental relation into inherent duties. Yet this is what we do every day with our own children. Setting aside the radically false or foolish tendency of much of the theoretically religious and ethical teaching of the home circle,—due to mental limitation or moral perversity on the part of the elders,—there is still grave fault to be found with a great many very virtuous and right-thinking parents. The artificial tone of modern life has introduced an artificial standard into domestic ethics. Very rare is the family whose sliding scale of duties, especially for the young folks, is radically healthy and rational, whose system of obligation and merit, reward and punishment, is not sadly conventional and modeled for the most part on a mere regard for the personal and material convenience of the family. The consequence is, that little and in themselves unimportant things get raised factitiously to the rank of grave moral virtues or faults; really important tendencies or phenomena get neglected or winked out of sight. The worst of it is, that the very outcroppings of youthful temperament which are the most normal and promising, if rightly directed, are often most apt to get nipped in the bud and parentally clapper-clawed because they interfere with the convenience of older people. Baby Anna—restless, prying, merry, delightful little midget!—is at this moment busily occupied in hauling out all my papers from a drawer of my desk, and presently, her curiosity satisfied in this direction, will give a tug at books, or table-cloth, or something which will make wreck of my writing apparatus and illustrate Hood's idea of "the source of the Niger" with a spilt inkstand on the parlor carpet. If I am a blockhead, I shall scold and perhaps punish the evil-doer. Good sense will bid me wipe up the spot, and pick up the papers, thankful and cheerful for the strong vitality which fills all the little limbs with happy life,

and for the active, observant temperament which, God willing, shall some day make her a blessing to her children, her dependents, her readers, or her fellow-laborers in all good works. Neddie has just come home with shockingly muddy boots, gained in racing "cross lots" on the way from school, and a woful rent in his trowsers from shinnying up the apple-tree in the front yard. Mamma's neat soul is outraged at the one, and the parental pocket aches at thought of the "V" needed to make good the other. But what shall we care about boots and trowsers when the full-grown lad is winning honor and doing his duty on Western plains, tracing iron arteries through the heart of the continent, or seeing God's wonders face to face on the dizzy crests of the sierras?

On the other hand, how much of petty vanity, or meanness, or sensuality, or trickery, or malice, or sloth, either gets entirely passed over in the little people's training, or assumes some shape so pleasing to the parental heart as to win actual praise and reward. And how often do we find others—how often are we ourselves—wise enough to take absolute stand-points and broad views, and praise or punish according to that which is really good or hurtful for the youngster's nature, and not merely for our own pitiful comfort, vanity, or convenience?

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### *FRIGHTENING CHILDREN.*

THE greatest difficulty in the way of properly rearing children is that their elders forget that they were ever children themselves. Parents, with all their love and tenderness, are often so unmindful of the extreme sensibility of their offspring, that they think to amuse by frightening them. This is like tickling them with a needle; it is all pain and no pleasure. Because a fright is intended to be a joke, it is no reason that it is so understood, especially by the little folks, who are altogether literalists.

Nothing can be worse for a child than to frighten it. The effect of the scare it is slow to recover from: it remains sometimes until maturity, as is shown by many instances of morbid sensitiveness and excessive nervousness.

Not unfrequently, fear is employed as a means of discipline. Children are controlled by being made to believe that something terrible will happen to them; are punished by being shut up in dark rooms, or by being put in places they stand in dread of. No one, without vivid memory of his own childhood, can comprehend how entirely cruel such things are. We have often heard grown persons tell of the suffering they have endured, as children, under like circumstances, and recount the irreparable injury which they are sure they then received. No parent, no nurse, capable of alarming the young is fitted for her position. Children, as near as possible, should be trained not to know the sense of fear, which, above everything else, is to be feared, in their education both early and late.

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### *CHILDREN AND MONEY.*

MOST persons seem to believe that children, even after they have reached an age of intelligence and discrimination, should not be trusted with money; that those who are so trusted are almost invariably ruined. More harm is done, in our judgment, by an exactly contrary course. If children—at least when they are fairly out of leading-strings—are not allowed to have small amounts of money, how can they possibly learn its proper use? Wise spending is the result of experience, instead of theory, even with grown persons. How, then, should the merest youngsters learn to use sixpences and shillings steadily withheld from them?

Human nature is always benefited by a sense of responsibility, and children are by no means an exception. So long as they are deprived of money, they can have no clear idea of its

value, and, later in life, when they begin to get some, they very naturally waste it, in order to make up for their early deprivation. A boy should be allowed to buy his own tops, marbles, and skates, instead of having them bought for him. In this way he will enjoy them more, and have a more thorough appreciation of them. If he makes a mistake, chooses a bad top, or imperfect marbles, or poor skates, do not replace them with such as he would like; but let him use those of his own selection till he has the money to buy others. Next time he will know what not to buy, will be more careful in deciding, and will have gained a desirable feeling of self-dependence. It is, perhaps, a little hard for tender parents to compel children to abide their own mistakes. The rule seems harsh; but the world is so infinitely harsher a school than any home can be, that, for ultimate good, present pain may be endured.

Children accustomed to money in moderation have little, if any, temptation to get it by improper or dishonest means. It then ceases to bear the attraction of forbidden fruit, or to appear to their ardent fancy as if all happiness were included in its power of purchase. Are not the boys who pilfer, or carry from the household anything they can turn into cash, frequently those who have been impelled to it by a scant allowance of pocket-money from parents to whom it would have been a trifle? With legitimate indulgence they very soon learn that a shilling is worth but a shilling, and that a dollar is only a dollar; that, badly used, one or the other will bring discomfort as well as pleasure; and this lesson cannot fail to be of permanent benefit to them. The boy who has learned to use sixpences judiciously while he is ten or twelve, will be pretty apt to understand the proper value of dollars before he is out of his teens.

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*OTHER PEOPLE'S BIRTHDAYS.*

MY DEAR —: There is a great deal of truth in one remark in your last letter. There is danger that, where so much is done to amuse children and make them happy, they will grow up selfish and exacting. Here is one of the defects of an American training.

Everything is made so easy and pleasant for our young people that they take it for granted that the world was made principally that they might have a good time in it, but never feel the least responsibility about making a good time for anybody else. Even the path to the school-room is made so smooth that they feel impatient and almost angry when they encounter a real difficulty. They do not practice self-denial enough themselves to appreciate it in other people. The last year's bonnet and worn glove-tips of the returned missionary lady awaken only a good-natured contempt in the mind of the thoughtless girl, whose mother has never allowed her to look shabby, and who thinks, if anybody else does, it is because they don't know any better.

Our American life tends in this direction. To get all the enjoyment possible out of life, without very much thought whether anybody else gets any pleasure or comfort in return, is the main-spring of too many lives. We need to watch ourselves, lest, in our desire to give our children a sunny childhood, we forget to teach them how to make other people's lives sunny. Always to receive and never to give is as bad for children as for grown people. To be sure, there is not much they can do, and what they can is worth very little in itself, but just because it develops a generous thoughtfulness for others, encourage them in all their little plans for other people's pleasure.

Children are naturally generous, and delight to make and give presents, until they see their gifts considered as rubbish. Probably they *are*, but a great deal of love can be put into very common things. You keep *their* birthdays. Encourage them to remember the birthdays of the older members of the

family, even if their celebrations are troublesome and their presents useless. In the family festivals, let them have something to *do* for somebody else. Do not let the doing always be on your side.

Whatever tends to make our family life purer and stronger is doing the best and noblest service for society.

Here we must look for our strongest bulwark against the rising tides of evil that beat against our social system. We women listen to the growl of the storm in other countries; we tremble for our own, and feel so useless and insignificant!

Brave little Holland keeps the whole mighty Atlantic at bay with her dikes of commonplace earth and stones and turf—mere every-day material. Take courage, weary mother. Your life may seem to you not much more than a dreary grind, day after day, to supply the physical wants of your children; but if they grow up to love and honor you because you deserve their love and honor—if they go out from you to build up other homes like the one you have made to them the purest and sweetest place on earth, you have built a few rods of dike over against your own house, and so have built, not for yourself alone, but for all society—not for to-day alone, but for all time.

MARY BLAKE.

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### *CHILDREN'S NERVES.*

ON the street, the other day, we saw a fretful mother roughly shaking and chiding, for “being so cross,” a sensitive child, who shrank in nervous terror from the harsh blast of a toy trumpet, sounded in his ear by a jolly little urchin, who evidently had intended to give pleasure, not pain. The frightened child, with pale face, trembling lips, and pathetic little suppressed sob, struggled manfully to conquer his nerves and his wounded heart. “Cross” was clearly the very last word that should have been applied to the suffering little fellow, whose nerves were set a-tremble for at least one

whole day—not so much by the shock of the discordant blast, which a few kind words might have soothed away, as by the subsequent rough handling and rougher tones of his mother, and by his own very great effort at self-command.

Of course, the cruelty of this mother was unconscious, but not, on that account, much the less culpable. It should be the business of those who have the care of children, not only to see that they have proper food and clothing, but also to study their characters, dispositions, and nerves. Notwithstanding the attention that scientific physicians are now paying to the nervous system, we cannot yet expect to know the reasons why a noise, an odor, a touch, that is innocuous to most, to a few may cause terror, or pain, or faintness, or death. Yet, by observation, we may find out what affects unpleasantly the nerves of the child intrusted to our care, and, by avoiding as far as possible exposing it to the cause of its nervous fears or irritation, and by gently soothing it when such exposure is unavoidable, gradually inure its nerves to bear with fortitude the painful excitement.

In this way we have known nervous antipathies to be overcome when a contrary course would have produced serious consequences—perhaps even death.

A little girl whom we knew was thrown almost into convulsions at the sight of a cat or a dog. The parents would not allow either animal to be about their premises; and, with equal good sense, would never permit the child's terrors to be spoken of in her presence. If, by chance, one of the obnoxious animals approached her, she was always taken up, as if by accident, and her attention diverted. After a time, she gained courage enough to look at the causes of her terror, when their beauties and good qualities were pointed out to her, though she was never asked to touch them. Now the child has grown to be a young woman, conspicuous for her fondness for all animals, and especially for dogs and cats. Had her parents abruptly attempted to make her conquer her antipathy, its impression would, in all probability, have been so deepened that she could never have risen above it. In a similar case,

of which we have been told, the child died in convulsions, induced by being compelled to touch a horse, the object of its nervous terror. On the other hand, by weakly humoring such fears, talking about them in the presence of those subject to them, and thus allowing or leading their minds to dwell upon them, the unfortunates may be all their lives subject to the bondage of an unreasoning terror.

A striking instance of the danger of disregarding a nervous dread is related in the memoir of Charles Mayne Young. A young gentleman had been appointed *attaché* to the British Legation at St. Petersburg. On his arrival at that capital, he was congratulated by the ambassador on being in time to witness the celebration of a grand *fête*, and invited to accept in the great church a seat among those reserved for the ambassadorial party. Though, in such cases, an invitation is equivalent to a command, the *attaché* begged to be excused. Being pressed for his reasons, he gave them with much reluctance.

"There will be martial music," he said, "and I have an insuperable objection to the sound of a drum. It gives me tortures that I cannot describe. My respiration becomes so obstructed that it seems to me that I must die."

The ambassador laughed, saying that he should esteem himself culpable if he allowed his *attaché* to yield to a weakness so silly, and commanded him to be present at the *fête*.

On the day appointed, all were in their places, when suddenly was heard the clang of martial music and the beat of the great drum. The ambassador, with ironical smile, turned to see the effect upon the "young hypochondriac." The poor fellow was upon the floor, quite dead. On a post-mortem examination, it appeared that the shock to his finely strung nervous organization had caused a rupture of one of the valves of the heart.

If, then, as we see, the adult, with every reason for subduing nervous antipathies apparently so unreasonable and ridiculous, finds it impossible to do so, how can a little child be expected to control or explain them?



## WEANING THE BABY.

“YES, I know I ought to wean her.” How many mothers say this, and say it with a sad consciousness that they are neglecting a duty to themselves and the child by putting off the evil hour—the mother-heart shrinking from what she feels must be pain to her darling. With tender prescience she sees the week of weeping and baby agony she will have to encounter. And so time goes on, and the child, who should have been weaned at between nine and twelve months, is unweaned at fifteen—indeed, among working-women I have known them to be unweaned at two years!

Of course there are babies and babies—it may not be possible to prescribe a rule for all cases; the best age for weaning baby may come just as it is suffering from some infant trouble, in very hot weather, on the eve of a journey—a dozen things, in short, may make it advisable to defer the time; but, for healthy children, there is no age at which weaning is so easy to mother and child as from nine to twelve months of age, and the later it is after such age the more difficult.

Yet, need it be such a painful time? I think not. I know that in the case of a healthy baby, accustomed to being nursed at regular hours, there actually need be no trial to the child, provided the mother has patience and firmness,—not even a tear. Foolishly fond mothers, who have used nature’s food as a solace for every woe, will not perhaps find a tearless weaning possible; but I write for those tenderly wise ones who have observed as regular hours for baby’s meals as for their own; or, for those about to become mothers. To these last I would say,—as you value your baby’s health and comfort, your husband’s ease, and your own nerves, *begin with the first day* and accustom the baby to nurse only at certain hours.

Infants have no natural depravity, no inevitable tendency to squall and rage; yet so renowned are they for their exploits in that way, that many men smile cynically—and fathers of families, too—at the mention of a “good baby.” Nay, moth-

ers of babies who make their life a weariness to them have been known to smile pityingly at the parents of a happy, sleepful child, attributing the restlessness of their own tormentor to its superior organization !

Cleanliness, order, and punctuality are the mother's charms ; with these, and plenty of fresh air, most healthy children will sleep twenty out of the twenty-four hours for the first three months of their being.

I would here say, be very careful of waking a sleeping child ; one authority says, never do so unless the house is on fire. Accustom it to go to sleep on its bed ; lay it down immediately after nursing *from the first*, and you will never find it necessary to rock it to sleep.

A newly born baby will require food oftener than when older ; but constitutions differ so much that it is best to consult your doctor as to the number of meals it will require during the day, and then adhere *strictly* to his rules. This point is so often neglected, or, the necessity for some rule for feeding being acknowledged, it is so often considered time enough to begin "when baby gets older," when it is a difficult matter to break habits formed, that, for the sake of mother and child, it cannot be too strongly urged. Physicians say, half the colicky babies are made so during the first month of their life, by the old school of monthly nurses or foolish mothers overfeeding them, or keeping them so warm that every breath of fresh air afterward chills them.

As the child gets older, gradually diminish the number of meals, letting it, however, take as much food as it cares for at each one, until at six months it has but four meals during the day from its mother and one at night. At that age it is well to begin feeding with a little oatmeal porridge, or prepared barley food ; begin with a tea-spoonful, gradually increasing the quantity till, at nine months or thereabouts, it will take a hearty meal of it. Of course, every mother must be guided by the constitution of her child in the choice of food, for one child will starve on what another will thrive on ; but avoid feeding entirely, or even principally, on corn-starch. The best hour

for giving this extra food will also depend on circumstances. A good plan is to nurse the baby at eight A. M. and at noon, at four and at seven P. M.; and at ten A. M. give the oatmeal or barley gruel. The first step in weaning will be to break off one meal. The four-o'clock meal is the best to wean from first: when the baby comes in from its airing, a cup of warm food may be ready for it. It is well, if convenient, for the mother to disappear the first time the substitution is made. Wait a week before weaning from a second meal; then break off the noon nursing in the same way, having the food quite ready when baby comes in hungry. In mild weather, the young child should be out every sunny hour of the day; modern carriages enable it to sleep as restfully as in bed. Let it get quite used to this change before proceeding to another. The weaning from the evening meal it is best to leave till last. When it becomes time for this, give simply as much warm new milk as the child cares to take, then put it to bed as usual. There is now but the night nursing left. This may be broken off by giving a cup of warm milk the moment it wakes, for a few nights, gradually decreasing the quantity till it will no longer wake for it, but sleep till morning, when it is well to give it as much milk as it wants. This may seem a slow and tedious plan in the telling, but it is not so in practice; to a tender-hearted mother, it is at all events preferable to the week of tears and struggles that follows weaning by the short and sharp method.

One word more about feeding the baby. By giving its meals at certain hours and those only, one meal has time to digest before another is taken. You thus avoid a fruitful cause of colic. A baby, too, who is fed regularly only craves food at certain times, and then it will take a hearty, satisfying meal, while one nursed every half-hour is ever craving and restless; its stomach cannot digest the food so constantly introduced, and crying, wakefulness, and general misery are the result. There will be plenty of elderly women, mothers of large families, to tell you that you can't bring a baby up by book, and that you *must* feed it when it is hungry. And

it is hard for a weak young mother, with her one little lamb, to set her opinion against that of an elderly matron with half a dozen grown children to attest her motherly success. It is hard to do this, even when they tell you, as one such mother told me, that nothing but "Winslow's Soothing-syrup" saved the lives of all her children! Another point, which will have much to do with baby's comfort and your success in effecting the "weaning without tears," is that it shall not have been rocked to sleep.

I never had any trouble—and never met with any one who had—in making babies go to sleep in bed instead of in the arms, when they have been so laid down from the first. Never accustom a baby to a quiet house or a darkened room when it sleeps; let everything go on just as usual—talking, laughing, music; it will sleep through all. Who has not been met at the door of a room with a finger on the lip, a "Hush! Baby's asleep," and seen the wretched father on tiptoe, afraid almost to rustle his paper? However easy it may be to secure quiet, is it worth while, for a false idea of necessity, to make your husband a martyr, your visitors and friends victims, to baby?

So it is with baby putting itself to sleep; it may appear very unnecessary for it to do so to the young mother with plenty of time on her hands, and plenty of love to lavish on the sweet little thing. What so pleasant as to sit and watch it as you rock, slowly drifting into dream-land! To have her baby in her arms is a delight to a tender mother, and if she were sure of having but the one, perhaps she might safely indulge herself; but most women have household affairs to attend to during the day, and in the evening the child's father—unimportant a member of the family as he may have become since baby's advent—will still be more happy if his wife can spend her evenings with him cozily, as in early married days, than if she is upstairs from seven to nine, rocking, walking, singing to the little Moloch above. For be sure baby will abuse its privileges, and instead of quietly dropping off to sleep in a few minutes, as it would if put snugly into bed, it will have



wide open, sleepless eyes for at least an hour or two; then every time it wakes—and children so used wake pretty often—the same rocking and singing process must ensue, and soon the poor young mother's life is a long weariness. But it is when another little one comes that the training of the first becomes a matter of importance. Those who do not believe in good babies—that is to say, in healthy, happy ones—goodness in a baby means comfort—will tell you that, with all the care and punctuality in the world, babies will be cross: I have not found it so, but I have found that the outrageous, cross, sleepless children are those who are rocked and carried about, and for whose pacification the whole house caters.

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### *MUSIC AND DRAWING AT HOME.*

A MOTHER writes to us: "Our income is so limited that every dollar weighs full weight in the year's expenses. Under these circumstances, would you advise that our girls should be taught music and drawing? The boys have received college educations." To which we reply that the decision must depend on the individual girl. Unfortunately, the individual girl has very little to do with the course of her parents, in regard to her education, if she happen to live in a small inland town or farm neighborhood. Life and action in these places are, as a rule, governed by universal custom rather than by practical personal reasons. The mysterious power called "fashion," or "style," governs not only the clothes, but the daily habits and doings of the inhabitants of a small town much more arbitrarily than those of a city. We wish we had a voice strong and penetrating enough to reach every family in such classes, and show them the folly of this herding together in small matters like a flock of unreasoning sheep. The farmer or small shop-keeper judges for himself in business matters,

but he eats, dresses, and lives after the fashion set by the squire; and his little daughter must go through the same training as the squire's heiress, or lose caste. "College educations," in such cases as often these are, grow at great sacrifice to the parents, not because the boy is especially fitted to receive a classical training, nor because it will better fit him to be a helpful citizen of the world, but because "it is a step upward,"—it is "more genteel." As to the effect of the collegiate training, we have nothing to say; we only quarrel with the motive of giving it. Precisely the same motives apply to a girl's so-called accomplishments. In countless towns, the acquisition of the proper rank in gentility involves the necessity of "piano lessons" for the girls. The instrument is bought after much saving and stinting in other matters. Nelly is brought, through sore tribulation, to hammer out a half-dozen dashing marches or waltzes, and that is the end of it. After she marries, she neither plays for her own pleasure nor for her husband's, and she is not competent to teach her own daughter. But the piano is there, a big assertant token of social rank. If any such ambition as this urges our correspondent, we can only assure her that no greater outlay can be made of money or time for such small reward. If a girl or boy evince decided musical ability, or ability, indeed, of any kind, let no money, labor, or time be spared in its culture. It is, perhaps, their one weapon,—their one expression,—the magnetic cord with which they will be brought into relation with the world. But let it be trained and encouraged just the same, whether it be a genteel talent for music or drawing, or the more ignoble skill in type-setting, carving, sewing, or cookery. Find what material is actually in your boy or girl, and make the best of that. Don't model them after your own idea. Many a financier was berated as stupid, when a boy, because he could not master Horace or Homer. Many a brilliant woman remembers a youth neglected and solitary, when she disappointed a mother because she could not rival the town belles in pretty little accomplishments. "Can you purr?" said the cat to the ugly duck. "Then, of what use are you in the world?" The fact

is, however, that most mothers are on the lookout to find swans in their ugly ducklings. Genius is not likely to be overlooked in any American household. It is the dull, ordinary boys, the matter-of-fact, homely girls, who need to have their education carefully guarded. If it will please or soothe the woman in lonely or sorrowful days to thrum her little airs, or sing her little songs, all success to her and her "piano lessons." But, in heaven's name, not a note for the sake of gentility! If she have expertness of fingers, but no imagination, shall she not be taught to draw because she never can be a Raphael? She may design posters and bill-heads, and earn a comfortable meal thereby, some day, for her children.

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#### *INTELLIGENT CHARITY IN CHILDREN.*

YOUR little article, entitled "Children's Pennies," has just attracted my attention. It is sadly true that the usual ways in which children are taught to give their alms have an unhappy, instead of an elevating, influence upon them. The mission-money in the Sunday-schools is given with little or no sense of personal interest or deprivation.

I take my little four-year-old girl down to a place where a few of us have been for some years engaged in a loving work of mercy, in caring for sick and friendless women, and little babies. Her blue eyes open wide at the sight—babies in the crib, babies on the floor, babies in arms, babies everywhere, and all of them little waifs, who cannot know a mother's care, save such as we try to spare them from our own little ones in our more blessed motherhood. The parcel of clothing, or the little toy, is put in her hands to leave with them, and already she feels her little heart swelling with love and sympathy for those she is helping, because she sees them, and sees the use made of her little gifts.

*THE BEGINNER IN JOURNALISM.*

THE local staff of a city newspaper shows in a measure and in one direction what a beginner's opportunities are. Most of its members are young and ambitious, and while the "city department," as their particular branch of the profession is called, requires a special order of abilities and is not elementary or tentative in its nature, its functions are such that it is very well fitted to give the aspirant a practical view of what is before him, and to enable him to test and develop his talents. The varied knowledge and experience he acquires, the familiarity with men and their arts, the introspection of life and the severe discipline, are of service to him throughout his career, no matter how exalted his position may become,—whether it be that of the autocratic editor-in-chief, or that of the much humbler subordinate.

A reporter need not have more than a common-school education; for, though culture and literary power add to his chances of advancement (and without them he cannot, indeed, attain the best positions), they are not indispensable. The more essential qualifications consist in the prophetic sense of the passing events in which the public will be most interested, extreme simplicity and directness of statement, faithfulness to duty, a temperament that will bear snubbing while an object is to be gained, and the utmost pertinacity. Short-hand is useful, but, except in large meetings, it is by no means so important a part of the equipment as the sense of news or the indefatigable industry which overcomes every rebuff and denial. Of course a certain facility of expression and picturesqueness of phrase are necessary; but a polished style is not. The serviceable reporter is shrewd, practical, active, alert, and explicit, rather than profound in thought, critical in manner, or elegant in diction; and if he possesses the former qualities he is sure to succeed in his own department, though (unless he complements them with something more) he cannot rise above it.

The principal morning papers of New York employ from twenty to thirty salaried men in gathering local news, and in



addition to these a variable number of others are employed as "special" or "space" men,—that is to say, their services are engaged and paid for at the rate of from seven to ten dollars for each column of matter printed. The "specials" are recognized as members of the staff, and are usually probationers, who, when they have won their spurs, are put on a salary amounting to considerably less than the sum earned under the previous arrangement. In other words, when they show the capacity to do forty dollars' worth of work a week independently, they are reduced to a salary of twenty-five dollars. The "specials" have every disadvantage; they are not assigned to duty until all the salaried men are disposed of, and the latter are so numerous that in many instances they leave few opportunities for the former, who must either remain idle or discover news in the fortuitous quarters that have not been anticipated by the city editor. To be able to do this successfully implies the possession of tact, pluck, and fertile resources, without which the beginner, amid the crowd of competitors he meets in a metropolitan office, cannot earn his bread and butter. Most of the applicants for employment who seem to be of the proper sort are told that they may take their chances with the "special" staff, which, however good their credentials are, and no matter how brilliant their college record may be, is all they can expect. A salary is soon given to those who have the requisite qualities, as we have said, and those who have not linger about the office for a few weeks, and disappear.

The writer remembers a mild-mannered youth who offered himself, without introduction or recommendation, to the city editor of an important New York daily—a youth who had already seen service in provincial offices, and who was very glad indeed when he was offered a chance on the "special staff." He appeared at the office every morning when the assignments were being made; now and then he was appointed to do some little service, and on one memorable occasion he was commissioned to describe the condition of the markets, in three-quarters of a column. Three-quarters of a column meant seven dollars, and so long an article would give him the oppor-

tunity to display his abilities which he desired. The article was written, revised by the editor, and set in type; it was quite acceptable. But at night, when the critical moment came, there was a great excess of matter; the article was cut down to a paragraph, and the paragraph was eventually left out of the paper. Although he gave all his time to the paper, his first week's earnings were less than five dollars. The second week's earnings were about seven dollars, and the third week's were lowest of all; but after that they rose magnificently, and in the fifth week of his novitiate he was put into a regular position.

We have mentioned this incident to show the disheartening circumstances that hedge in a beginner, and also to enforce the fact that the demonstration of his own capabilities is the best introduction he can possibly have. In a fairly conducted office the graduates of the city department are selected to fill vacancies in the editorial staff, and the proprietors of newspapers in smaller cities often apply to the New York papers for men to take responsible and profitable positions.

The machinery and operations of the metropolitan offices are so much more extensive than any others that we believe the training and experience a young man acquires in them are a great help to him; but, at the same time, he can become an excellent journalist without resorting to New York. Should he obtain a start on such a paper as the "Springfield Republican," the "Cincinnati Commercial," the "Boston Journal," or the "Chicago Tribune," he could qualify himself for all that the profession has to offer, and his chances of advancement would be superior, as the competition out of New York is not as close as it is in that city. There are editors who, like the late Samuel Bowles, take a personal interest in the young and promising members of their staff, and by kindly supervision and suggestion impart to them the fundamental principles of journalism, which are not too commonly understood. Mr. Bowles made his office a practical school, and his graduates reflect credit upon their teacher in the various positions to which they have risen. He once gave the writer a column of

matter and told him to condense it; the column was reduced three-fourths, and he then reduced the remaining fourth to a paragraph of a few lines, which retained the pith and sense of the original with remarkable fidelity.

A polite letter, stating the attainments and experience of the sender, will usually meet with a response from the editor to whom it is sent, but it is always desirable for the candidate to present himself in person. A clever, sincere, and industrious fellow, who has real talent, will not have to beg for work long, though sometimes his patience may be heavily taxed and his hopes wearily deferred. If his pen is quick and his ideas are fresh, he may land over the heads of the mediocrity, which is the only material that stagnates in a good newspaper office.

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*HOW TO BECOME A TELEGRAPHER, AN  
ENGRAVER, AN ARCHITECT.*

IT is usually a sense of personal disappointment, rather than any better reason, which impels the practitioners of many professions to discourage those who seek information as to the prospects of a beginner. Few men, indeed, are so well satisfied with their occupation that they are disposed to speak favorably of it, and in many instances they view it from the embittered stand-point of their own unrealized ambitions. "Don't let your boy be an architect; don't let him be an engraver; don't let him be a telegrapher. Choose some other employment for him; ours is hopeless." The unanimity of the discouragement is perplexing, and it is usually unjustified; for, while many occupations do not lead one to a competency, they at least insure a respectable livelihood for those who engage in them faithfully and industriously; and, though more brilliant things may be hoped for, a respectable livelihood, in the decline of life, is more than half the world obtains

for its labor. A special order of abilities, concentrated and exerted in a proper direction, are the essentials of substantial success, of course; but there is much ability adrift in the world that is adaptive, and there are many boys who, not having a "call" to a particular profession, are willing to accept any situation that offers. No eminence can be attained in architecture or engraving without special abilities; immense executive ability is needed in the chiefs of the telegraph service. But the last generally requires a more common order of qualifications than the other two; and, though these three occupations are not in the least affinitive, I have embraced them in this paper, since a representative of each spoke to me deprecatingly of his profession without—it seems to me—sufficient cause.

#### TELEGRAPHY.

There are various schools of telegraphy in all large cities, which advertise attractively for pupils and promise situations for their graduates. But all of these are repudiated by the managers of the telegraph companies and by practical operators, who not only say that the schools have no influence whatever in procuring situations, but also that the training they impart is of no real advantage. There is one exception, in the classes of the Cooper Union, which are instructed under the auspices and supervision of the Western Union Company. They are formed exclusively of women, and the tuition is entirely gratuitous. The graduates are taken into the employ of the company at salaries of twenty to twenty-five dollars a month. But the announcements of other schools, conducted by private persons, are misleading, and the fact that a young man has attended one would not add the least weight to his application for an appointment as operator. It is not that the knowledge of the instrument and its manipulation which he acquires is useless, although the practical application of it is very different from the theoretic study; but he is possessed by a sense of completeness which unfits him for the proper subordination of a beginner, and much that he has learned is an



incumbrance, of which he must be relieved before he can adapt himself to the circumstances of a good operator.

There are probably not less than twelve thousand operators in the United States, of whom nearly two hundred and fifty are employed in the main office of the Western Union; and the salaries paid range from twenty to one hundred dollars a month. Very few of them have attended schools of telegraphy, or had other instruction than that which they have "picked up" while performing other duties in telegraph offices. Many of them have been messengers, and have qualified themselves for the higher position by studying the sounds of the instruments while waiting for assignments. Others have been office-boys, who learned in the same way—nearly every office in the country has a boy or two in tutelage. The most expert are almost invariably self-taught. Four perfect instruments are set apart in the operating department of the Western Union office for practice; and, when the work of the day staff is over, at half-past five o'clock in the afternoon, any ambitious boy in the office may sit down at these and learn how to operate them. Having begun work at eight o'clock in the morning, he may not feel disposed for further exertion; but his advancement will depend on his persistence. The simplest letters soon become intelligible, and by degrees the tickings of the instrument are as coherent and fluent to him as print. While he is familiarizing himself with the instrument, he is also learning the technicalities and details of the office, and their reality impresses them in his mind, which would not be the case were they nominal and fictitious, as in the so-called schools. When he can transmit and receive messages accurately, he is occasionally allowed to work on the less important wires during the dinner hour, or during an unusual pressure of business; but it is probably four or five years before he is classified as proficient, and it is the opinion of Mr. Warner, the chief operator of the Western Union in New York, that not more than one person in ten who learns telegraphy ever ranks as a first-class hand. Entering the operating room, a boy is paid about twenty dollars a month, and his hours are from eight o'clock

in the morning till half-past five in the afternoon, with only a twenty minutes' intermission for lunch. In a year or two he may be worth forty dollars a month, and his promotion depends, of course, on the facility and accuracy which he displays. There is no brilliant opportunity, no career of great promise; but there is an occupation, with fair remuneration, to which many persons are adapted. Perhaps in the future women will supersede men as operators, and—overlooking the irregularity of their attendance when they are not quite well or the weather is stormy—the men with whom they are placed in competition and the chiefs of the service regard them favorably. Some of the former, who have families to place, show a disposition to let the girls become operators and to find other employment for the boys. But if, after learning telegraphy, a young man is diverted into another business, his ability to manipulate an instrument is likely to be serviceable to him. In journalism, in railway affairs, and in nearly all large commercial establishments, this accomplishment is available, and it may help to advance him and secure an increase of salary.

#### ENGRAVING.

The extraordinary progress made in the graphic arts of late years, the multiplication of popular illustrated works and periodicals, the tendency of large firms and corporations to use pictures instead of letterpress in advertising their commodities, are trustworthy indications that the business of an engraver is now more than ever before a promising field for a beginner with an aptitude in that direction. But if we accept the statement of the engravers themselves, without an allowance for that sense of personal disappointment and weariness which we have previously spoken of, no occupation is so barren of inducements as this. They are more emphatic than the telegrapher, the architect, or the soldier in saying, "Don't put your boy to our trade; turn his footsteps in another direction." As a matter of fact, the standard of a successful engraver is higher now, and the necessary qualifications greater, than

hitherto. Formerly, the office drudge, without education of any kind, and without any definite intelligence or aptitude, was allowed to practice at blocks in his spare hours; and, by degrees, he acquired a certain mechanical facility that qualified him for a position in which he hacked out whatever beauty and softness the drawings intrusted to him had. He was the bane of artists, not having the capacity either to understand or to interpret them. But the art revival has compelled a change; and, besides perspicacity and manual facility, the engraver who would succeed must have a knowledge of drawing and color, and a sympathetic understanding of the work submitted to him. For this reason, a young man ambitious of becoming an engraver should have some preliminary training in art, and, we might almost say, should be a finished draughtsman before he attempts the sister profession. But, even supposing that he has an education, that he can draw and has art sympathies, he must in most cases enter the office as a subordinate, and carry the burden of many profitless details before he is afforded an opportunity to develop in the direct line. He is received in the office as a boy, with a salary of three or four dollars a week. Eventually, superior equipment and intelligence will be recognized, and with ordinary talent one may obtain a lucrative and honorable position. The salary of an engraver is from twenty to fifty dollars a week, but a master hand of positive ability and experience commands four or five thousand a year. This profession is also adapted to women, and two or three have already acquired high rank in this country.

#### ARCHITECTURE.

In architecture, which also is inauspicious in the opinion of its followers, the conditions are wholly different from either of the previously mentioned occupations. In such a country as this, where material progress at least is unintermittent, and where the most familiar expression of it is (generically speaking) in elaborate piles of brick and mortar, one would expect the architect to be a man of high prices and large profits, if not of

invariable good taste. But the few who are preëminent, who have influence, reputation, varied experience, and great ability; who have invested money, as well as other capital, in their businesses, do not often reach greater profits than ten or fifteen thousand dollars a year. Many more have much less, and the majority, who are fully qualified, but without capital or influence, do not receive as large salaries as the practitioners of other professions who have relatively the same education and degree of talent. To enter an architect's office with a reasonable prospect of success, a boy must have definite abilities and a sound technical education, such as may be obtained at the Rensselaer Polytechnical Institute at Troy, the Sheffield Scientific School at New Haven, the University of Michigan, the Stevens Institute, or the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Courses in architecture have also been introduced in Yale, Columbia, and the College of the City of New York. All of these schools provide suitable training; but the Massachusetts Institute devotes itself to the education of architects more than the others. It would be possible, of course, for a young man to find a situation in an architect's employ without the expensive preliminary education; but the competition with his companions who possessed it would be so great that he could only succeed by desperately hard work and an uncommon order of abilities. The salary of a beginner is small, even when he has been graduated from a college or technological institute; but it is usually sufficient to support him, and after a few years it is increased to twenty or twenty-five dollars a week.

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### *ELEMENTARY INSTRUCTION IN THE MECHANIC ARTS.*

**I**MMEDIATELY after a child has passed the destructive age, the age in which he breaks things in order to see what makes them go, he enters upon a period devoted to attempts to construct something. If he is so fortunate as to have kin-



dergarten training, this inherent tendency is taken advantage of, and even in the common primary school some use is made of blocks and pencils; but when the child passes into the grammar-school, what a dreary waste it seems to the active brain and the restless hand!

Is it not true that at the very age when manual dexterity can be most easily and surely attained, most children are removed from all opportunity to learn how to use their hands, except such chance as they have in playing marbles, peg-top, base-ball, and other games, and that they are set to work on purely mental exercises? From the age of six or seven to fifteen or sixteen, are not most boys and girls confined five hours a day at mere head-work—the little variation that music and drawing have lately given being more than counterbalanced by lessons out of school? And, if a parent tries to keep his children out of the public mill, does he not find that his choice lies between a private school that is wholly given over to classical study, or one that serves as an asylum for incapables?

What child, of rich or poor parentage, is the worse for the possession of some degree of manual dexterity? Who can tell when the child is ten years old what its position will be at twenty? The changes in position, in this country, are reason enough why boys and girls alike should learn to use their hands, at least in the elementary way proposed in this paper. It has been observed that the active and restless boys who used to get flogged the most for truancy and mischief have often made the most capable men. Why was this? Perhaps because playing truant required or developed some decision of character, and the mischief perpetrated often called for sagacity in planning and dexterity in execution. Their trained sagacity and dexterity have served them in later years, notwithstanding their truancy.

But this is not the whole. The boy who can play well, and who is the leader in athletic and other sports, is so because he has trained his muscles and his hands to act readily under quick and intelligent mental direction. Are not these also the qualities

that make the skill of the handicraftsman? In former days, before machinery had been so widely applied to the necessary work of life, the faculties which had been partially developed by the boy in various games were, a little later, applied by the apprentice to the handicrafts by which a livelihood was to be gained. Even the boys who went into business, no matter what their social position, were obliged to take their turn in building the fires, sweeping the lofts, opening the cases, packing the goods, and other arts not of a very high kind, indeed, but yet developing that most invaluable quality which no other word can describe — “gumption.” In place of the varied work that the mechanic apprentice, or the boy of the store, was formerly called upon to do, what substitutes have we found? Such inadequate ones that it is a matter of common remark that the best workmen among the repair hands in the factories, whose work is of a varied kind requiring manual skill, are now almost all old men.

In many trades where manual skill is required in finishing and assembling after the machine work has been done, the best hand-workmen are more and more from the continent of Europe, where manual labor still prevails to a greater extent than in England or in this country, and where there is an inherited capacity for skill in handicraft. We are training *no American craftsmen*, and unless we devise better methods than the old and now obsolete apprentice system, much of the perfection of our almost automatic mechanism will have been achieved at the cost not only of the manual but also of the mental development of our men. Our almost automatic mills and machine-shops will become mental stupefactories.

There is a better chance for women to retain their faculty of manual dexterity, because it has not yet been possible to apply machinery to the work of women in nearly so great a degree as it has been applied to that of men.

This question of industrial training has lately received much attention from those who are attempting to reform our system of education, and to adapt it more fully to the necessities of American life, but many of the proposed methods aim

too high. Elementary instruction in the intelligent use of the hand itself must precede all attempts to apply the hand to specific trades.

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The Bureau of Combined Charitable Associations of Boston is, at this very moment, attempting to find employment for large numbers of idle women. There is now, as there always has been, much complaint of the grievance of the poor sewing-women. On the other hand, the employers of women, especially of those who can sew, cannot find hands enough to do the work that is pressing to be done. It may be a hard saying, but it must be said—the poor sewing-women deserve no sympathy because of their poor wages—they are paid all that their work is worth; but they deserve the utmost sympathy because their hands have not been trained, when they were children, to do better work, and thus they might have become entitled to better pay.

The idle who have health and strength deserve no sympathy because they can get no work, but the utmost sympathy for their want of capacity, or their want of opportunity to learn how to do the work that is now pressing to be done. In the last four or five years, there may possibly have been a little time when even capable men and women could not get work,—the writer doubts even that. But whatever has been the fact in these late years of extreme depression, it may now be safely asserted that the only reason for compulsory idleness of man or woman is incapacity to apply the hand to the work that is waiting for hands to do it.

It is not true that machinery displaces the use of the hand, any more than that railroads diminish the demand for horses. It alters the conditions of such use. It compels in its attendance the use of the hand in a particular way. If the opportunity to use the hand is confined to one machine, the hand never gains its true cunning, but it becomes a part of the machine itself; that is the real trouble. But the use of machinery creates abundance, and gives more time for instruction. Children can now be spared for school who in olden

time would have been developing the cunning of the hand in hard work. Let them not lose their cunning; let us train their hands in easier and more effective methods than the arduous ones of old. If we do not compass this, of what advantage is the invention of machinery and its abundant product to the poor?

In what way shall we secure an adequate training of the hand for those who may never have an opportunity, except while they are in the common schools? The instruction must be simple and inexpensive; it must be such as will require but few tools and no machinery; it must be within the scope of ordinary teachers, or, perhaps, of elder pupils, to direct; and it must be done in the common school-house. May we not find in the work or play of common life some useful examples? It is said that most poor families now buy baker's bread. In the whole history of the wheat, from the time it is planted until the bread is eaten, the heaviest item of cost is the distribution of the loaves through the small shops that supply the poor. This is in the nature of things: the small shop, in which only a small traffic is done, must charge the highest profit in order to exist at all. The poor, therefore, pay the highest price for bread, and their children never see bread made. How shall elementary instruction in bread-making be given? Is there not room in almost every school-house, or could not room be provided, for a stove?—and may not a few pans and other implements be added to the school apparatus, as readily and as cheaply as many of the appliances now used? A little saving in the attempts at decorative art in many school-houses in cities, and the application of the money to the purchase of a cooking-stove, and some pots, pans, and scales, would well serve the purpose. Cannot any skillful woman prescribe a course for twelve children, assuming that they do not even know the use of scales for weighing, however well they may have been taught the scales in the arithmetic?

Next, there is now a sharp demand for women or girls to make artificial flowers. What is elementary instruction in this art? Is it not first the application of the hand to the use of scissors? How many children of the poor ever learn the art



of using scissors in cutting out paper dolls and paper dolls' dresses? May not the foundation be laid in cutting paper into squares, into circles, into leaves, into flowers, and then in combining colored papers into forms—twelve pupils doing the same thing at the same time? In this practice, a great deal of work might be done that would never be done in actual practice, because the forms would be cut with dies; but the work is not the object,—the object is to train the hand and mind together while making paper flowers, and when the lessons are over and the rubbish is swept away, then the pupil is ready to begin to learn, and learn quickly, the trade of making flowers. Could the manufacturer trust his choice material to those whose hands had not learned the art of using scissors? In connection with the instruction the art of combining colors could be taught, or it would be developed in those who had a natural gift or taste for such work.

Again, let any one who is not accustomed to the work visit a hosiery factory, and he will pass from frame to frame with wonder at the mechanism. He will see but few working people in the main mill attending the machinery, but presently he will pass to the finishing and packing room, and there he will find a crowd of girls at work in shaping, making-up, finishing, packing, boxing, labeling, and preparing the stockings for the market. The art of packing is one that could be readily taught. How many people know how to pack a trunk? There would surely be occupation for a considerable number of persons in our large city in packing the trunks, like the *emballeurs* of Paris.

Paper-box making can be made a medium for training the hand. The tools are few and inexpensive, the materials are cheap, the boxes would be of some use to the girls and boys who made them, and the hand would be trained.

The art of doing up bundles should be learned. How many boys and girls are trained in making up a neat and compact parcel? It is not a high art, but it is one that trains the hand. A half-hour spent every day for a few weeks in a common school, in doing up sets of irregular wooden blocks into

compact parcels, covering and tying them, would be time well spent. Give twelve children the same blocks, the same paper, and the same twine, and see which would excel.

We used to teach children how to sew by making patchwork. Can we not make patchwork on cheap sewing-machines? There is always a demand for experts in the use of the sewing-machine, at high wages,—but the employers cannot take time to instruct any but the very bright ones; their attention must all be given to the product for sale. What is elementary instruction in the use of the sewing-machine? Twelve cheap, strong machines, some spool cotton, and a lot of last year's pattern-cards of common calicoes, would serve the whole purpose. Patchwork to be made on the machine need be of no use except for a bed-spread. In making the patchwork the hand will be trained to the mechanism. The clothier can then begin to employ the pupil.

If we try to teach the trades before the alphabet of the trades is learned, we shall fail. The alphabet of all the trades, without a single exception, consists of the ten fingers, the two eyes, and a fair power of observation.

It would be interesting to see what would be the result of a year's course of instruction, in the afternoons, of a set of twelve children attending a grammar-school in the morning. Two months in weighing, measuring, kneading flour, and baking bread and crackers—all hand-work. Two months in cutting white and colored paper and combining forms—all scissors-work. Two months in cutting, pasting, and modeling pasteboard into boxes—hand and tools together. Two months in working calico scraps into patchwork, on ten-dollar sewing-machines—machine and hand combined. One room would be needed, and the tools and stock would be of little cost.

Do not all boys covet a printing-press? Is not a course of printing-ink in the house as sure as the measles? Cannot type-setting be made to serve as a lesson in the use of the hand? If boys could be taught to put a few of their own observations in type, it would be a better way of learning English than to study grammar at the mature age of twelve, when the very capacity to know what grammar really is is not

yet developed. Might not a single hand printing-press and a small quantity of large type serve a useful purpose? Give out a simple subject, or an object to be described, and let each of twelve boys set six lines of type. Assemble the twelve paragraphs and print in the hand-press in one form; then let each boy compare his text with the others. What would be the result? A lesson in the use of the hand, and a better method of composition than any that the grammars or readers contain,—far better than learning by rote the names of the parts of speech, or practicing what is called parsing.

Wire-working would require very simple tools and inexpensive stock. The same is true of the making of willow-ware.

Why should not the little girls in the primary schools learn the art of using scissors in cutting paper dolls and paper dolls' dresses by patterns of similar kind, that can be struck off on the lithogram without any appreciable cost, if the teacher has the least capacity to use a pencil? What would be the cost of stock in learning the alphabet of the milliner's art, if all idea of commercial value in the product were kept out of sight? Straw-plaiting is almost of necessity a handicraft. Not much leather, and that of little value, with a few hand-tools, would serve for the harness-maker's alphabet. If the aim is not too high, lace-making might readily be used to make girls' fingers answer quickly to many other purposes.

Do we not aim too high in the consideration of industrial training? It is not the fine art of needle-work that is required, but the common art of sewing.

If drawing in the public schools was only taught as a fine art, if it was not almost the single exercise in handicraft now taught, it could not be defended at the public cost. But even in the direction of art, why should all our cheap jewelry be so bad when, for a few shillings each, Matlock and Torquay, in England, will furnish beautiful mosaics made like the Florentine, for which we have endless varieties of material? It must be a simple handicraft, not difficult to learn.

No money value is looked for from the work of the student who is learning a profession; much less should it be looked for in the work of one who is preparing to learn a trade. The

professional man must learn first to concentrate the power of his brain, the machinist must first qualify himself to apply the power of his own hand.

In the month of February, at the examination of the school of the Institute of Technology, the writer inspected the work of about a dozen boys who first began to learn the art of the blacksmith in October last. The whole time of their work, which had covered three lessons per week for four months, was equal to twelve full days' work of ten hours each; the rest of their time had been devoted to study. The examples of their work laid out for examination and comparison consisted of a set of steel tools, *forged*, *tempered*, and *finished*, ready to be used in the course of instruction in metal-turning in which they are now engaged.

May it not be claimed that this single example proves the whole case?

The elementary principles that lie at the foundation of all the trades can be taught with no more cost of appliances, no more expenditure of time, not so great an expenditure for salaries, as are now expended in what passes for mental training in schools that, to some extent at least, and in some cases, disqualify their graduates for the work to be done by them in order that they may gain a comfortable and a reputable subsistence.

We have maintained the versatility of our people, and the power of adaptation to changing circumstances, up to this time, because our public school itself is a better educator than the instruction that is given in it. It is thoroughly democratic, and its influence is not yet exhausted; but with the growth of dense population engaged in manufacturing, the wider separation into classes of rich and poor, and the deadly monotony of many of the departments in our minutely subdivided manufacturing and mechanical establishments, new and grave dangers are arising that must be met in the schools. If we do not develop in them the deft and cunning hand and the lissom finger, manual dexterity and handicraft will become lost arts to the majority of our people.



## PART VII. FOR THE YOUNG FOLKS.

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### *SPINNING AND WEAVING.*

A HUNDRED years ago, in every farm-house and village house all over New England, there was one thing, and one interest, that has vanished, and died out, and been superseded. A thing that belonged to the *girls*; and an interest and ambition that the girls grew up to. A pretty, picturesque thing, and a pretty feminine industry and emulation that cannot be replaced.

It was the old spinning-wheel, with its light lines and its graceful treadle; as artistic a fireside ornament as a harp, and as suggestive of low, pleasant music, and quiet, restful moods. And the busy ambition was the spinning stores and stores of fine white wool and glistening flax, to make blankets and flannels, and beautiful bed and table linen; trying who, in her maidenhood, could lay by most, and smoothest, and fairest, against her matronhood.

Every girl learned to draw the buzzing threads, and turn with quick, deft motion the whirling circle that twisted them so swift and firm; to step lightly to and fro beside the big one, or lean from her low seat to the spindle of the little flax-wheel, as

the yarn or the thread drew out and in, in the twirling and the winding. And so, every girl was a "spinster," and kept on spinning, all her possible time, until she married, and took home to her husband's house, for years and years of thrifty, comfortable wear, the "purple and fine linen" she had made.

You are spinsters now, every one of you. That is what the law calls you, until you are married women. And that is what life makes you, whether you will or no,—whether you like it or not.

You can't get rid of it; though the spinning-wheels are dropping to pieces in the old garrets, and the great factories are thundering beside the rivers, to turn wool and cotton into all the cloth the great, hurried world needs; where no one any longer makes anything for himself, but makes or fetches—or catches hold and pretends to have a hand in fetching—something in whole or in part for everybody else; that everybody else's work may come around to him, in the different kinds, as he wants it. All right; all inevitable. And yet you girls are spinsters, just as much as ever girls were.

What a poor, slack, twisted, uneven thread you turn off, some of you! What sleazy, unserviceable, fraying stuff it will weave into,—what rough, worrying garments it will make, and you will have to *wear*, one of these days, when you will begin to wish you had realized your spinsterhood, and minded better the distaff and the wheel.

I suppose there is not one of you who does not think that "by and by" holds all things right and beautiful for you; things just as you would have them; an ideal self, such as you would be, in an ideal home, such as you will surely make, "if ever you have a house of your own."

When things go criss-cross,—when your life discontents you,—when the old, and the tiresome, and the hindering, the threadbare and the every-day annoy and jar,—then you think of this house of your own, this time of your own, this life of your own, that are coming, in which shall be freshness, and satisfying, and things in your own way. You improve wonderfully upon your mother's fashions: you "never will have"

this, and you "always will have" that. Well, how is it to come about? I will tell you one thing: you never will jump into it and find it ready made.

It has got to be by your own spinning and weaving, now beforehand. You are getting your house and your home ready every day. By and by, well or ill plenished, you will have to live in it. Are you really laying up anything toward it, as the grandmothers made and laid by their sheets and their "pillow-biers," and their pretty damask-patterned table napery, and saw them piling up in chest or on shelf, for the certain furnishing? If not, do you want to know how to begin? Are you willing to spin some little real thread every day? You can. You can always be about it. You can be growing rich in things that will be actual comforts and providings, ready to your hand when you want them, and when you cannot get them up in a hurry at the moment's need.

Everything you know how to do, that is done in a home, is something spun and woven and laid upon the store; something acquired for a life-time, that will last as those beautiful old linens used to last; something that you will never have to spin and weave again.

I do not mean something that you have done once, or once in a while, or that you think you know how *ought* to be done. I mean something that you have got at your fingers' ends, till it does not seem hard to you, or cost you the least toil of thought and anxiety. Something that you can handle as you handle your crochet-needle, or run your fingers up and down the piano keys, playing your scales. Something that you can do as you "do your hair," or tie a bow-knot in your cravat; with turns and touches that you do not measure or think about, but have got so used to that the right thing comes of it,—the result that is nice and becoming, and full of a skillful grace that cannot be analyzed or got at by method or recipe, but that you have just grown into, forgetting how.

The terror of housework, the terror of servantless interregnums, the toil and ache of things unaccustomed, the burden of care whose details are unfamiliar,—all these, with the break-

down of hope and strength that they bring, are because of things left till that time you are dreaming of; threads unspun till the house-linen ought to be in the closet. You could n't tie a bow-knot without labor and worry; you could n't make thimble and needle work together to take ten stitches, if you had done either thing just once or twice a good while ago, and not every day of your life for ever so long,—if you just knew the theory of the thing and had never put it to use. And every bit of a woman's work and responsibility in a home, when she takes it up as a strange thing, is like tying a bow-knot for the first time, or like sewing, or knitting, or crocheting to one who has never touched the implements before. When you think of trying one such task after another, day after day, in all the complex doing that "housekeeping" implies, with your very living depending upon it all the while, you may well fancy how it is that American girls break down under the physical and mental strain that comes upon so many of them with that fulfillment of their happy hopes—the having and ordering a "house of their own." There is no help for it, but just the making all these things, in their knowledges, such parts of yourselves as the alphabet and the multiplication table, and the consciousness of the parts of the day, and week, and year, are; things that have been used till they are like limbs and senses—natural furnishings that you feel as if you were born with. Then, you can take hold of life, and live. You have not got the whole way and method to invent for yourself.

And the best of all is, that *one* thing grasped in this way is the *essential* grasped of a great many more. Every side of a honeycomb cell is the converse side of another; every row of knitting is half a stitch all along for the next row; in all kinds of building and making, that which is completed is already the beginning of the further structure.

Begin with your own things and your own place. That is what your mother will tell you if you rush to her, enthusiastic with great intentions, and offer to relieve her of half her house-keeping. Don't draw that little bucket of cold water to have it poured back upon your early zeal. Reform your upper



bureau-drawer; relieve your closet-pegs of their accumulation of garments out of use a month or two ago. Institute a clear and cheerful order, in the midst of which you can daily move; and learn to keep it. Use yourself to the beautiful,—which is the right,—disposing of things *as you handle them*; so that it will be a part of your toilet to dress your room and its arrangements while you dress yourself; leaving the draperies you take off as lightly and artistically hung, or as delicately folded and placed, as the skirts you loop carefully to wear, or the ribbon and lace you put with a soft neatness about your throat. Cherish your instincts of taste and fitness in every little thing that you have about you. Let it grow impossible to you to put down so much as a pin-box where it will disturb the orderly and pleasant grouping upon your dressing-table; or to stick your pins in your cushion, even, at all sorts of tipsy and uncomfortable inclinations. This will not make you “fussy”—it is the other thing that does that; the *not* knowing, except by fidgety experiment, what is harmony and the intangible grace of relation. Once get your knowledge beyond study, and turn it into *tact*,—which is literally having it at your fingers’ ends, as I told you,—and order will breathe about you, and grace evolve from commonest things, and uses and belongings, wherever you may be; and “putting things to rights” will not be separate task-work and trouble, any more than it is in the working of the solar system. It will go on all the time, and with a continual pleasure.

Take upon yourself gradually,—for the sake of getting them in hand in like manner, if for no other need,—*all* the cares that belong to your own small territory of home. Get together things for use in these cares. Have your little wash-cloths and your sponges for bits of cleaning; your furniture-brush and your feather-duster, and your light little broom and your whisk and pan; your bottle of sweet-oil and spirits of turpentine, and piece of flannel, to preserve the polish, or restore the gloss, where dark wood grows dim or gets spotted. Find out, by following your surely growing sense of thoroughness and niceness, the best and readiest ways of keeping all

fresh about you. Invent your own processes; they will come to you. I shall not lay down rules or a system for you. When you have made yourself wholly mistress of what you can learn and do in your own apartment, so that it is easier and more natural for you to do it than to let it alone,—so that you don't count the time it takes any more than that which you have to give to your own bathing and hair-dressing,—then you have learned enough to keep a whole house, so far as its cleanly ordering is concerned.

*But don't keep going to your mother.* You have every one of you probably some independence of money, or some possibility of economizing it. Buy your own utensils; set up your own establishment, if only by slow degrees. You will know the good of it then; and you will be setting up your character at the same time. There will be no sudden, violent resolution and undertaking, which drafts aid and encouragement from everybody about you, getting up prospective virtue by subscription, and upsetting half the current order of the household for an uncertain experiment. Be in earnest enough to make your own way, and before you or any body else thinks about it, you will have become a recognized force in the domestic community; you will have risen into your altitude without assumption, just as you are growing, by invisible hair-breadths, into your womanly stature.

Then, some day, you may say to your mother, “Let me have charge of the china-closet and pantry, please”; and you may enter upon a new realm, having fairly conquered your own queendom. And I can tell you this new one will be a pretty and a pleasant realm to queen in; an epitome of the whole housework practiced in dainty, easy little ways. Shelves to be kept nice, wiped down with a soft wet cloth wrung from the suds that cups and silver have come out bright from; cups and silver, plates and dishes, to be ranged in prettiest lines and piles and groups on the fresh shelves; cupboards to be regulated with light daily touches and replacements; yesterday's cake and cake-basket, fruit or jelly, custards or blanc-mange, to be overlooked and newly dished for the next table-setting; the

nice remnant of morning cream to be transferred to a fresh jug and put in a cool, clean corner; to-day's parcels, perhaps, to be bestowed; and the doors closed, with a feeling of plenty and comfort that only the thrifty, delicate housewife—who knows and utilizes the resources that are but uncomfortable odds and ends to the disorderly, heedless, procrastinating one—ever has the pleasure of. All this is, cozily and in miniature to the larger care of kitchen and larder, what the little girl's baby-house has been (if she began, like a true woman-child, to "spin and weave" for her womanly vocation) to the "house of her own" that she—you—began to talk of then, and that you are earning a right to now. And pretty soon this daily care, this daily pleasure, will have become a facile thing, a thing easily slipped into the day's programme, and never to be a mountain or a bugbear any more, either to do or to teach; because you "know every twist and turn of it," and it is not a process of conscious detail, but a simple whole that you can dispose of with a single thought and its quick mechanical execution.

In like manner, again, you can take up cooking. You can learn to make bread, until the fifteen minutes' labor that it will be for you to toss up the dough for to-morrow's baking will not seem to you a terrible infliction, when it happens that you may have it to do, any more than the mending of a pair of gloves for to-morrow's wearing; simply because it will be an old, accustomed thing that you know the beginning and the end of—not a vague, untried toil looming in indefinite proportions, that are always the awful ones.

You can take some simple, frequent dish, and for a while make it your business to prepare it, whenever it is wanted—dipped toast, perhaps, or tea-muffins; and you will wonder, when you pass on to some other thing of the sort in change, how the familiar managing one matter of measuring and mixing, boiling or baking, has given you "judgment" and handling for the clever achievement of the next. For there are declensions and conjugations in the grammar of housewifery, and a few receipts and processes become like "Musa, musæ,"

and "Amo, amare," and make you free of the whole syntax of cookery, and, like "all print" to Silas Wegg, all its parsing and construction are open to you.

I can only briefly hint and sketch in this one limited "talk." But a little leaven leaveneth; if you begin on the *principle* I try to show you, you will feel yourself gathering powers and wisdoms, and these very powers and wisdoms will themselves open to you the methods and suggestions of more. More, and deeper, and higher; for you will begin to reach into things behind the outward ordering, that are inevitably related, and out of which all true and orderly expression grows.

You will begin to order yourself: you will have begun already. You are making the manner of woman you shall be in this living of yours, that is to be externally pure and sweet and gracious.

This also will have, and is having, its outward stage; but it deepens inwardly, in its own turn, day by day. Everything thorough must.

You want to make yourself pretty and pleasing—lovely, feminine, attractive in person and movement and dress. This almost always comes first; it is the object-teaching and leading; good and true *in its place*, and not thrown away as valueless or evil, even when the truth behind it comes to be seen and sought. A woman *should* be sweet and pleasing; if she have a sweet and pleasing nature, she will be, whether her nose be Greek or snub, her hair dusky or golden. There is a secret to it that I wish I could tell you without seeming to fall into the trite old sayings that you will think are put in for properness—to be agreed to and then dropped for quicker inventions—for little arts and tricks and studies and touches that slip dangerously into false habit and self-absorption, corrupting the nature and the life-love, and defeating desire with its own anxiety.

*The short road is not all the way round upon the circumference, but straight out—a radius from the heart.* And this is not a moral saying, opposing itself to your inclination, but a real "open sesame" to help you quickest to what you want. It is the secret by which the rose blooms. You could not put its







LOOKING IN THE GLASS SPOILS YOUR COMPLEXION.

petals on ; you can make a rag-rose so, but it will be a rag-rose after all. Nature has cunninger, sweeter, easier ways ; she works no clumsy, laborious miracles, wrong-side out. She nurses a live, hidden something—a true desire to *be*. And the sunshine and the rain, and all outside life that is, searches and meets the answering life in the green little bud ; and *that* stirring, stirs all the lovely, secret possibilities that are under the green, outward into tender petaling and color and fragrance ; and the rose, that was *meant* to be, is born. “For God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him ; to every seed its own body.” Just believe this ; be alive to the things that are *not* yourself, and yourself shall surely be as beautiful as God sees you can be.

An old woman told me once, when I was a little girl : “Don’t look much in the glass ; it spoils your complexion.” I suppose it was a device, but it hit the very fact. Look in the glass ; think of yourself, and take care of your person, and your dress, just as much as must be, to put yourself in fresh and appropriate order ; and mind you refer the question of how much that is, always and faithfully, to conscience. Then go away and forget ; and don’t get a habit of glancing and returning, needlessly. You cannot think how much that strict self-judgment would condemn will be saved by just making and keeping this rule. And how greatly you will gain, too, in the very things that you would take too much thought for, and that your Father knoweth your need of, and will give you as He gives to the lilies and roses. “*I am the rose of Sharon ; I am the lily of the valley.*” Beauty and perfectness are hidden in Him, and come out from Him. If His life is in you, you need not be afraid. You will not be unlovely ; you will not miss of anything that you can be. “No good thing, and no perfect thing, will He withhold from them that walk uprightly.” But every over-anxiety hinders and interferes with His work. Every look that you study in yourself, for mere look’s sake ; every way you practice for affecting,—even for an involuntary instant,—will counteract and spoil some better look and reality that might have graced

you. Don't look in the glass too much, literally or metaphorically; it will spoil your *complexion*, which is your true harmony and putting together.

Lay up your treasure in heaven. Spin and weave for the life-garments; for these are in the unseen kingdom, and the seen things are only signs of them. Make yourself, every day, some even thread; weave carefully some faithful web in your temper and character. Be sweet, be beautiful in your thoughts. Be full of gladness along with others, full of interest in others' plans; grow strong in patience, by bearing evenly with little bothers; every one of them shall help you to be strong against great troubles and in great needs; calm and wise for yourself and your *others*, to save troubles and meet needs that will face you by and by. Spinsters of your very selves you are; and, since life grows inevitably from the seed of self,—since it is existence, not imposition,—spinsters of your own story and circumstance, beforehand, more than you dream. You are making, now, the plan of a whole lifetime; your occurrences shall be different, according as you spin at your wheel of character the thread of your identity that is to run through them; for character does make circumstance; some things cannot happen alike to all, since all living does not lead into the same possibilities of happening.

This is the wonder of the spinning and weaving that we are all set to do for ourselves here in this world: working at wheels of life from which are fashioned and furnished our garment and our whole house for the time everlasting; the body and condition that we shall find grown out from the fitness we have made in ourselves, as surely as we find the flower grown from the seed we have planted: "Earnestly desiring"—and it is the real, earnest desire that all the while creates and determines in kind and quality—"to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," or from the inward. "*If so be* that, being clothed upon, we be not found naked."

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*HELPING ALONG.*

“**N**OW she has got a moral fit, and is trying to be dreadful good. She always does so after being naughty,” said a little friend of mine, glancing at a younger sister with the superior air of one who was never naughty.

The meek, repentant expression of the other child changed at once to a half-sullen, half-defiant look, and she turned away, grieved and angered by the very voice that should have been full of kindly encouragement in the well-doing so hard to most of us.

We often witness little scenes like this, and very naturally wonder why children are sometimes so unsympathetic, why trying to be good should excite ridicule instead of respect, and why, when we all know by experience how hard it is to do right, we are not more ready with the helping hand, the hearty “Cheer up and try again,” which is so sweet and comforting.

This is work that “we girls” are eminently fitted for by nature and by grace, if we choose to see and make the duty ours. The gift of sympathy is a very lovely one,—more lasting than beauty, more useful than many an accomplishment, more magical than any art a woman can possess, for it is the key that opens hearts, a passport to the hidden world of romance that lies behind our every-day life, the touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.

Not the sentimental sympathy ready to gush into tears at the loss of a pet bird, and to exhale in sighs when the test of real trouble comes. But the power of reading in the faces of those about us something of the hopes, the doubts, and needs that live in all of us; the skill to answer a wistful look with a cordial Can-I-help-you? glance, and put into the grasp of a hand the subtle warmth that telegraphs without a word the glad message, “Here’s a friend.”

It must be genuine, simple, and sincere, with no thought of reward, though wonderful returns are made from most unexpected sources, as in the dear old fairy tales the beggar whom

the good girl feeds gives her a gift that smooths her way through life.

I think we cannot begin too early to cherish this winsome grace both in ourselves and others. Fathers and mothers, set a good example, which brothers and sisters should follow, glad and proud to stand loyally by one another through both defeats and victories.

I well remember how helpful was this sort of sympathy in my own tempestuous girlhood, when every day was a struggle with the trials that beset a strong-willed, hot-tempered child. A look, a word, a warning gesture; and often going to my little journal to record with tragic brevity, "A bad day," I found a line or two waiting for me full of the tender disappointment that goes deeper than reproach, the never-failing belief in the possibility of success, the sweet assurance that "Mother never forgets to ask God to help the little daughter trying to be good."

Next to mothers come sisters, and to them I earnestly recommend the subject, for I cherish a cheerful belief that the girls of the present are going to profit by the work of the girls of the past so well that the girls of the future will have a splendid start.

"Boys are so horrid nobody *can* be patient with them," says many a sister, driven to her wit's end by the manifold transgressions of the brothers, whom she too often regards as inflictions to be lamented over and got rid of as soon as possible. The boy's rude enjoyments, droll mishaps, and soaring aspirations have no interest for the girl, busy with her gentle pleasures, little duties, and romantic dreams. So they grow apart, and years later, when the man has done something to be proud of, the woman wants to share the glory; or if he fails and troubles come, the sister, taught by her own experience, longs to comfort him; but now it is a hard task, for the hearts are shut, and it is almost impossible to establish in a day the affectionate confidence which should have grown with their growth, and too late they learn how much they might have been to one another if they had only begun in time.

Girls are quick to see and feel many things that escape other eyes, and how can they use this power better than in watching over the more adventurous and willful spirits of the boys? Bear and forbear, help them to shun temptation, be ready for the first sign of repentance, and try to make it easy for the proud or stubborn to say the hard words, "I am sorry." No matter how absurd or inconvenient a form the penitence may take, never laugh at it or put it by as of no value. A repulse just at the tender moment may lock up a confidence that never will come back. No matter how often the solemn resolutions are broken, believe that amendment is *always* possible, and be to those brothers what I heard a sister once called, with looks that were blessings, "Our Conscience."

As young people like stories better than sermons, and have great skill in finding the moral, if there is any, I will sugar-coat my little pill with an incident which illustrates this point exactly.

A certain scapegrace—Johnny by name—tormented his sister's kitten, and being discovered, excused his cruelty by saying coolly :

"Well, a cat 's got nine lives, and I don't see any harm in hanging her a little, 'cause if she does lose one she 's got eight more to fall back on."

The anguish of Sue over the injured darling was great, and a day of solitary confinement on bread and water did not seem too severe a punishment for the hard-hearted boy who could even think of harming a downy white kit like Puff.

But as night came on, Sue began to relent, for Pussy was so lively that partial suffocation really did seem to agree with her, and the vision of poor lonely Johnny, with his three slices of bread and three mugs of water, rose before her in the most pathetic manner.

Getting a free pardon from the higher powers, she went to bear the glad tidings, but peeped through the key-hole first to see how it was likely to be received. A somewhat limited view of the cell revealed the prisoner's head lying on his arm, and a candle in dangerous proximity to his curly pate.

"Poor Johnny!" breathed tender Sue, and, unlocking the door, she entered, beaming with peace and good-will.

But brief as had been her delay in getting the key to turn, an entire change had come over the captive, and no sign of "poor Johnny" could be discovered in the unrepentant-looking boy who sat with his boots on the table, hands in his pockets, and an expression of the utmost unconcern upon his youthful countenance.

"I thought you might like to know that Puff is quite comfortable again," began Sue, rather daunted by this sudden change.

"Course she is! Can't kill a cat so easy as all that," with a contemptuous shrug.

"Would n't you like to come down now?"

"Don't care particularly about it."

"Please do care, Johnny, for I'm lonely if you are n't. No one shall say a word about it, and we'll all be glad to see you back."

Johnny put his feet down and moved uneasily in his chair, for Sue had smoothed the way to freedom so sweetly, his bottled up remorse began to work within him.

"Did *you* ask father?"

"Yes; I knew you would n't do it again, and must be very tired of staying here so long."

"Oh, I've been busy, and had lots of fun making that."

Lifting the light, Johnny proudly displayed upon the wall the motto, "Do as you would be done by," made of what at first looked like a series of queer, black blots.

"That is a very good one for you to have," began Sue, then started back with an irrepressible "Ow!" for on going nearer to admire, she discovered that the blots were beetles of some sort.

"Oh, Johnny, how horrid! What are they? How could you do so to those poor things?"

"Cockroaches; and you need n't howl, for they were all as dead as Julius Cæsar before I put a pin into 'em."



Then, as if some explanation were necessary, and this a good opportunity to make the *amende honorable*, he added, soberly:

"You see, when I came up, I was so mad I planned to put all the bugs and things I'd caught in my trap into your bed and pockets, and down your back, first chance I got. But I had to wait, and somehow my mad all went off, and then I thought I'd have a motto, something like those you've got. The one in your room has leaves and ferns around it, and I had n't a thing but these old chaps lying around. Don't you know, in that Dickens's book, one of the fellows makes a picture of dried skeets? I thought I'd try the cockies, and it was great fun putting 'em up. Neat thing, is n't it?"

The utter absurdity of the golden rule being framed in starved cockroaches never struck Johnny, but it did Sue, and she was on the brink of a laugh, when a glance at the boy's face, as he surveyed his work with pensive satisfaction, made her smother her merriment, by a great effort, and try to answer gravely:

"I never saw anything so curious; and I do hope you will remember not to be cruel, for papa says really brave people never are, and I know you are n't a coward, for you never hit a boy smaller than yourself," gently moralized Sue.

"I'd be a mean sneak if I did!" exclaimed Johnny, with scorn.

"Then I should n't think you'd hurt a poor little cat, who cannot fight one bit," added Sue, feeling that she had got him now.

No answer from Mr. John, who suddenly affected to be absorbed with a refractory roach, who would twirl around on his pin instead of pointing gracefully upward in the last letter of the word "you." But Sue saw a slight pucker around his mouth, and knew that it was all right, for that peculiar pucker was a sure sign that emotions of the tender sort were getting under weigh. So she put her hand on his arm, whispering, with a gentle pat:

"You need n't *say* you are sorry, for Puff and I forgive and forget. Wont you please come down, dear? I can't enjoy myself a bit if you don't."

"You go along—I'll come in a minute," from Johnny, in the gruff tone that Sue knew by experience was the last growl of the storm.

But she had barely time to get to the dark corner of the hall when there was a rush from the rear, a rough arm came around her neck, a kiss went off like a pistol-shot, and a voice that was no longer gruff said, all in one hearty, incoherent burst:

"I *am* sorry, I never will again, you're a first-class girl, and I'll keep the old cockies up there forever 'n' ever, to make me remember to be as good to cats and things as you are to me!"

Sue had many a laugh afterward to pay her for the one so wisely smothered at that critical moment, and Johnny's repentance, though it took a droll form, was sincere, for he laid the words of the cockroach motto to heart, and tried to be worthy the love and respect of a "first-class sister."

School-mates and bosom friends can do a geat deal for one another in this direction, not by constant fault-finding, but by patiently trying to cure the faults in the kindest way. There are plenty of little reforms in manners and habits, as well as in thoughts and feeling, to be undertaken, and the best test of friendship is this mutual help and confidence.

I once heard about a set of girls who felt it their duty to tell one another their faults with entire frankness; in fact, they quite exerted themselves to drag forth the hidden weaknesses of their young souls, all with the best intentions in life. Of course a general explosion soon followed, and the eternal friendships lasted about a week.

A wise observer interested in these attempts at "culture," as the girls called it, suggested that, instead of looking for faults, they should try to discover and strengthen the virtues in one another, remembering that only those without sin may throw stones at their neighbors.

The damsels tried the plan, and it is pleasant to know that it succeeded admirably, and many lasting friendships rose from the ruins of the Candor Club and the Palace of Truth.

Here is another little story, in which some younger girls learned the same lesson in another way :

Two sisters were at school together, one a general favorite, the other almost universally disliked, owing to an unfortunate temper which was always giving and taking offense. Being as proud as passionate, the poor child felt keenly the prejudice against her, and tried to conquer it; but her efforts took such odd or inconvenient shapes that they were received with laughter, incredulity, or coldness.

Even her sister, annoyed by her freaks and wearied by her short-lived repentances, seemed to shut her out from the happy world in which the others lived amicably together, and little Jane, after hotly resenting this banishment, retired into herself to mourn over her own iniquities with all the helpless anguish of a sensitive, unhappy child.

No one guessed the little tragedy going on in Janey's heart, but left her to herself till accident betrayed how much she suffered, and how severely she was punishing herself for the faults all condemned, yet no one helped her to cure.

A teacher, going her rounds one night to see if all was safe in the dove-cot, found Janey lying on the floor beside the bed in which her sister lay, snugly tucked up and fast asleep. Thinking that the restless child had fallen out, the teacher stooped to waken her, but saw that this chilly couch had been purposely chosen, for a corner of the bed-side carpet was folded over Janey's feet, and under her cheek lay a little handkerchief, still wet with secret tears.

Surprised and touched, the lady stood a moment, feeling that this was some self-inflicted penance of the odd child's, which must be stopped, yet might be turned to good account if rightly treated.

Lifting the little icicle, she carried her away to a warm room, and Janey waked up with an arm about her, a kind face

bending over her, and a motherly voice saying, "Tell me all about it, dear."

Taken off her guard, Janey's reserve melted like mist before the sun, and the full heart involuntarily overflowed at the first gentle touch.

"No, I did n't fall out—I went on purpose when Fan was asleep," began Janey, unable to resist questions that were accompanied by caresses.

"But why?"

"I heard the big girls reading about some good folks who did such things to make them better. I'm so bad nobody *can* love me, not even Fan, and so I tried this way, though I can't ever be a saint, I know."

"This is not the first time, then? and this is how you get such colds and chilblains?" exclaimed the teacher, wondering what revelation would come next.

"Oh, I want to have them, for if I ache and sneeze, it makes me remember better than black marks or scoldings. Those good people had prickly belts and whips, and things that I can't have; but colds do very well, and chilblains are first-rate," answered the young martyr for conscience' sake, chafing the poor feet, which were nearly as red as the flannel nightgown she wore.

"But, Janey, dear, there is no need of punishing yourself like this. You will get sick, and that would grieve us all," began the teacher, touched to the heart by those innocent confessions.

"No, I don't think anybody would care *much*. P'r'aps if I died the girls might cry a little, and be sorry they were n't kinder to me when I was alive. I'd like them to know I tried to be pleasanter, though they did n't believe me when I said so. Do you think they would then?" asked the child, with a sob, as if her morbid imagination already pictured the pathetic scene and rather enjoyed it.

Feeling that something must be done at once, the teacher promised to speak to the girls, and assure them of Janey's sincerity in her efforts at reformation. But Janey stood in



such dread of their ridicule she was terror-stricken at the idea, and would only consent to Fan's being told in strict secrecy; and after much comfortable counsel, was about to depart to bed in a happier frame of mind, when another sprite appeared.

It was Fanny, who had waked to find her sister gone, and, being rather conscience-pricked for her late neglect, had come to "kiss and make up."

Seizing the propitious moment, the teacher told the story of Janey's private penances so well, that long before the tale was done there were two red nightgowns cuddling on the rug, two faces cheek to cheek, two little sisters promising to love, and trust, and help each other truly, truly all their lives.

I hope they did, for in this troublous world of ours there is no braver, better work for young or old than that of patiently, kindly lending a hand and helping along.

### WORTH YOUR WEIGHT IN GOLD.

"YES, Miss Mamie, dat 's jes' what de missus sed to me. 'Aunt Patsy,' sez she, 'you 's jes' wuf yer weight in gole.' An' so I wuz, Miss Mamie; I know'd it. Poor weak old cull'd pussun as I is, I know'd she war tellin' d' exac' trufe. De Lord knows 't aint no vain-gloruf'cation fur ole Patsy t' say dem words. I don't take no pus'nal credit 'bout it, Miss Mamie. Cookin' takes practice, but it 's got to come fus' by natur'. De ang'l Gabr'el hisse'f could n' make a cook out o' some folks. It 's got to be born inter yer, like. I 'se mighty 'umble and fearful ub myse'f 'bout some t'ings, but not 'bout cookin'. *Dat* I un'stan'; an' dat 's what made me wuf my weight in gole. Missus did n' hab no sort troubl' 'bout nothin' af'er once dis chile come. She *sed* so. Aint no use talkin' 'bout it—dere 's her 'cise words to prove it.

"Well, de work wuz mighty heavy in dat house. Stocks o' comp'ny, and massa war one ob dem perwidars dat don' hab no

sort notion how many pots kin go onto de stobe, and seem t' t'ink de oben was mos' big as de barn. Many 's de time I got so tired seem'd to me 's if I 'd drop; but af'er missus sed *dat*, I did 'n' mind nuffin'. 'Patsy,' sez I, when I seed myse'f gettin' done up, 'yer goo' f' nuffin' lazy nigger, wha' 's matter wid yer? Don' yer know yer 's wuf yer weight in gole?'—and dat ud fotch me squar' up. Many 's de time I 'se sed dem words to myse'f sence dat day, but wid dis diff'ence: Missus, dear soul! she done gone to Ab'am's bosom four year 'go; an' ole Patsy eber sence 's bin mos' too fur on wid dis 'ere cough to be much 'count to white folks—and so I keep sayin' tomyse'f, 'Yer *wuz* wuf yer weight in gole. Don' nebber forgit dat.'"

And, all this time, the brightly kerchiefed and check-aproned speaker was going on briskly with her work, while I sat looking at her with an amused smile?

Not a bit of it. She was in bed, dying of a slow consumption, and my heart was full of reverence as I stood gently fanning her. She was talking beyond her strength, but I knew it was useless to check her while her thoughts were with this treasured saying of her "missus." Presently she sank into a doze. I stood there, afraid to move lest I should wake her.

In a few moments she opened her eyes.

"Bress yer heart, Miss Mamie, don' stan' dere no longer. Ole Patsy don' want ter be nussed like she war a queen."

Her eyes were so bright and her tones so cheerful that I thought she was going to laugh; but, instead, she said softly:

"'T aint fur much longer; de Lord 'll soon sen' his char'ot an' take me to glory."

She ceased speaking. I knew by her face, though not a sound could be heard, that she was singing, under her breath, one of the dear old negro hymns that we had been used to hearing when she was up and at work; and then she fell into another doze.

Two weeks from that day the chariot came.

Happy old Aunt Patsy! (Even with the memory of her illness and suffering fresh in mind, I always think of her as

"happy old Aunt Patsy," for had she not been worth her weight in gold?) The dear old soul always had laid great stress, not at being prized at her weight in gold, but on being really "*wuf it*." That was the point. And the best of it was, that her weight being mainly in her being a good servant, it increased just so much in proportion as she excelled. Simple-hearted creature though she was, she would have scorned the idea of weight, in this connection, being a matter of mere flesh and bones. No, it was Patsy the cook who was weighed in the balance.

It seems to me now, that if I had seen Aunt Patsy when I was a little girl, and heard her tell her story, it would have been a great help. It would have taught me, in one easy lesson, that to be worth your weight in gold is a great advantage, and that the best way of becoming worth your weight in gold is to learn to do some one thing thoroughly well. Aunt Patsy could cook. That is a fine thing in itself. Cooking is a good business when one has a living to make, and a valuable accomplishment when one has a living ready made. Every one of us girls, little and big, young and old, should know something about it, and should seize all good opportunities to improve in the art. But I am not going to ask you to learn to cook; that is, not now, especially if it is not "born into you." I only throw out, as a friendly suggestion, that every girl should make it an object, as Aunt Patsy did, to learn to do one thing well at a time. If, as a start, she selects some style of housework, so much the better. Let it be sweeping and dusting; let it be bed-making; let it be clear-starching, silver-cleaning, or butter-making, or even a single branch of cookery, such as bread-making, or that rare art, potato-boiling. Let her aim at real excellence in any one of these, taking the most exact pains, looking out day by day for ways of improvement, aiming to excel herself at each effort, until, at last, "Jenny did it" (or whatever her fortunate name may be) shall stand as a guarantee for excellence in this or that special department. Let Jenny's butter or Jenny's bread be the best her father and mother ever tasted; or let them feel that no one else can so

brighten the silver, or the tins, or furniture; that it is sure to be all right if Jenny but sweeps the halls and stairs, or Jenny but makes the pudding,—“It ’s her specialty, you know,”—and you will see, if you are Jenny, what satisfaction there is in it.

Then, when one style of work is mastered, another can be taken up and made a study; and so on, till you are worth your weight in gold to your family. Mind, I do not mean to say that while these special endeavors are going on you are to do all other work carelessly and without interest. Not so, of course. I mean only that one branch at a time shall receive most care and attention till it is mastered to the utmost of your ability. Nor do I mean that you are to spend all of your young life in housework. An average of half an hour a day devoted to such work, or even less, all through one’s girlhood, will in many cases be all that is necessary or desirable. But certainly a little girl is to be pitied who never has a chance to learn practically the rudiments of housewifery. I hope none of you who read this are so unfortunate.

There are other fields of effort which you may cultivate. Sewing or music, reading, fancy-work, drawing, certain school-studies, gardening—whichever of them seems most attractive to you—will serve as a starting-point. I have dwelt principally upon the art of cooking, because Aunt Patsy set me talking; but there are many fair paths opening in every direction. Take the one nearest by, whether it lead to the kitchen, the parlor, the library, or out-of-doors. But be sure to be thorough as you go along. Don’t shimble-shamble through everything, and then wonder that those who love you best are not quite satisfied with your progress—that you do not really add to any one’s comfort or interest; in short, that you are not worth your weight in gold.

“I love books best, but can I be a help to anybody at home if I sit and read all day?” you may ask.

And I answer, you cannot. If you read too much, you are not reading well. If you read too steadily, you are not reading well. And if you read books that do not



make you more intelligent, more sunny, more charitable and Christian than you otherwise would be, you are reading very badly indeed. If you sit curled up on a sofa, selfishly neglecting some duty, and filling your mind with false ideas of life, and arousing thoughts that in your secret heart you know are not good for you, you are doing not only yourself an injury, but every one else with whom you may henceforth be brought in contact.

But if at seasonable times, and after proper intervals of play or bodily exercise, you read in an inquiring, sincere way books that entertain or instruct the best part of you (we all soon find out what that best part of ourselves is), and that have been selected under guidance of some one competent to help you, then you *are* doing others good as well as yourself by your reading. You can hardly go up or down stairs when in the mood such reading engenders without doing somebody good. If it is only the cat on the landing, she 'll get the benefit of it somehow. A sunny, healthy mind sheds beams of light unconsciously; and then there are the cheery word, the pleasant smile, the ready spirit of fun, the thoughtful question or answer, the entertaining bubbles of talk that rise to the surface of a mind set sparkling by good books worthily read. You will soon find the value of it all; or some one else will.

It is not so much what good thing we do, though that is of great consequence, but how well we do it that determines our success. A pragmatic, conceited manner, or a too selfish eagerness, will spoil any pursuit. There is such a thing, you must know, as being unpleasantly pleasant, meanly generous, incompetently competent, or even wickedly pious. If you will think a moment, you will see that it must be so. The wrong side of the prettiest fabric is always very near its smooth surface. If you do not keep the right side up with care, the wrong side will show itself. It is so with all desires and efforts for self-improvement. They have their wrong side.

Some persons, if once started on a road, will be so confident of their way that they 'll forget to make the proper

turnings; and there *are* persons who, if left to themselves, would from very earnestness hack a finger to pieces in getting out a splinter. That 's over-zeal. Such persons are not worth their weight in gold to anybody. Then there 's the self-satisfied kind, the worst kind of all, perhaps. Self-satisfaction is a wall that, builded by a girl's own vanity, shuts her in completely. She cannot get outside of it herself, and no one cares to scale it in order to get at her. A state of entire self-satisfaction is the loneliest thing on earth. Self-approbation is another matter. It is worth trying for because it is, in itself, good. But we must build steps with it, not walls.

That is what Aunt Patsy did. She cooked better and better every day. She worked hard for self-approbation, and slowly made steps of it. Steadily she mounted, always humble and fearful of herself, but always hearing her mistress's words, "worth your weight in gold"; and when at last she stood on the top step of her little flight, she felt sure the Lord would be pleased that Old Patsy had been of use to somebody, and she was ready to go when the chariot came.

"Swing low, sweet chariot,  
Coming for to carry me home."

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### *NOW, OR THEN?*

I SUPPOSE the wise young people—fourteen, fifteen, sixteen years old—who understand the most complex vulgar fractions, who cipher out logarithms "just for fun," who chatter familiarly about "Kickero" and "Iulius Kiser," and can bang a piano dumb and helpless in fifteen minutes—they, I suppose, will think me frivolous and unaspiring if I beg them to lay aside their science,—which is admirable,—and let us reason together a few minutes about such unimportant themes as little points of good manners.

A few months ago, I had the pleasure of talking with a gentleman who thought he remembered being aroused from his midnight sleep by loud rejoicings in the house and on the streets over the news that Lord Cornwallis had surrendered the British to the American forces. He was only two years old at that time; but, he said, he had a very strong impression of the house being full of light, of many people hurrying hither and yon, and of the watchman's voice in the street penetrating through all the din with the cry—"Past twelve o'clock and Cornwallis is taken!"

Among many interesting reminiscences and reflections, this dignified and delighted old gentleman said he thought the young people of to-day were less mannerly than in the olden time, less deferential, less decorous. This may be true, and I tried to be sufficiently deferential to my courtly host not to disagree with him. But when I look upon the young people of my own acquaintance, I recall that William went, as a matter of course, to put the ladies in their carriage; Jamie took the hand luggage as naturally as if he were born for nothing else; Frank never failed to open a door for them; Arthur placed Maggie in her chair at table before he took his own; Nelly and Ruth came to my party just as sweet and bright as if they did not know that the young gentlemen whom they had expected to meet were prevented from attending; while Lucy will run herself out of breath for you, and Mary sits and listens with flattering intentness, and Anne and Alice, and—well, looking over *my* constituency, I find the young people charming.

It is true that all manners are less formal, that etiquette is less elaborate, now than a hundred years ago. Our grandfathers and grandmothers—some, indeed, of our fathers and mothers—did not sit at breakfast with their fathers and mothers, but stood through the meal, and never spoke except when spoken to. I cannot say I think we have deteriorated in changing this. The pleasant, familiar, affectionate intercourse between parent and child seems to me one of the most delightful features of domestic life. The real, fond intimacy which

exists between parents and children seems a far better and safer thing than the old fashion of keeping children at arm's length.

But in casting aside forms we are, perhaps, somewhat in danger of losing with them some of that inner kindness of which form is only the outward expression. Without admitting that we are an uncivil people, insisting even that we compare favorably with other nations, I wish our boys and girls would resolve that the courtesy of the Republic shall never suffer in their hands.

Does this seem a trivial aim for those who are bending their energies to attain a high standing in classics and mathematics? There is perhaps no single quality that does as much to make life smooth and comfortable—yes, and successful—as courtesy. Logarithms are valuable in their way, but there are many useful and happy people who are not very well versed even in the rule of three. A man may not know a word of Latin, or what is meant by “the moon's terminator,” or how much sodium is in Arcturus, and yet be constantly diffusing pleasure. But no man can be agreeable without courtesy, and every separate act of incivility creates its little, or large, and ever enlarging circle of displeasure and unhappiness.

One does not wish to go through life trying to be agreeable; but life is a great failure if one goes through it disagreeable.

Yes, little friends, believe me, you may be very learned, very skillful, very accomplished. I trust you are: I hope you will become more so. You may even have sound principles and good habits; but if people generally do not like you, it is because there is something wrong in yourself, and the best thing you can do is to study out what it is and correct it as fast as possible. Do not for a moment fancy it is because you are superior to other people that they dislike you, for superiority never, of itself, made a person unlovely. It is invariably a defect of some sort. Generally it is a defect arising from training, and therefore possible to overcome.



For instance: two girls in the country have each a pony phaeton. One drives her sisters, her family, her guests, her equals, and never thinks of going outside that circle. Another does the same; but, more than this, she often takes the cook, the laundress, or the one woman who often is cook, laundress, house-maid, all in one. And to them the drive is a far greater luxury than to her own comrades, who would be playing croquet or riding if they were not with her. Now and then she invites some poor neighbor, she takes some young seamstress or worsted-worker to town to do her shopping, she carries the tired housewife to see her mother, she asks three little girls—somewhat crowded but rapturously happy—three miles to see the balloon that has alighted on the hill; she drives a widowed old mother-in-Israel to a tea-drinking of which she would otherwise be deprived. These are not charities. They are courtesies, and this bright-faced girl is sunshine in her village home, and, by and by, when her box of finery is by some mistake left at the station, a stalwart youngster, unbidden, shoulders it and bears it, panting and perspiring, to her door-step, declaring that he would not do it for another person in town but Miss Fanny! And perhaps he does not even say *Miss Fanny*—only Fanny. Now, she could get on very well without the villager's admiring affection, and even without her box of finery; yet the good-will of your neighbors is exceeding pleasant.

Another thing Fanny excels in is the acknowledgment of courtesy, which is itself as great a courtesy as the performance of kindness. If she is invited to a lawn party or a boating picnic, whether she accept or not, she pays a visit to her hostess afterward and expresses her pleasure or her regrets; and she pays it with promptness, and not with tardy reluctance, as if it were a burden. If she has been making a week's visit away from home, she notifies her hostess of her safe return and her enjoyment of the visit, as soon as she is back again. If a bouquet is sent her,—too informal for a note,—she remembers to speak of it afterward. You never can remember? No; but Fanny does. That is why I admire her.

If she has borrowed a book, she has an appreciative word to say when she returns it; and if she has dropped it in the mud, she does not apologize and offer to replace it. She replaces it first and apologizes afterward, though she has to sacrifice a much-needed pair of four-button gloves to do it! Indeed, no person has as little apologizing to do as Fanny, because she does everything promptly; and you may notice that what we apologize for chiefly is delay. We perform our little social duties, only not in good season, and so rob them of half their grace. It takes no longer to answer a letter to-day than it will take to-morrow. But if the letter requires an answer instantly, and you put it off day after day, your correspondent is vexed, and your tardy answer will never be quite a reparation. Remember that no explanation, no apology, is quite as good as to have done the thing exactly as it should be in the first place.

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### *GOOD-WILL.*

IN one of my walks, the other day, I saw two boys of my acquaintance, whom I shall call Orson and Robin, playing a game of barn-ball. I suppose every country boy knows what that is. The ball is thrown against the unclapboarded side of a barn, or any other suitable building, and as it rebounds, the thrower, who stands behind the knocker, tries to "catch him out." Of course, there must be no windows to knock the ball through, or, the first you know, there will be a pane to pay for, and, quite likely, somebody very cross about it. A nice little game it is for two; and as I used to be fond of it when I was a boy, and am something of a boy still, I stopped to watch my young friends Orson and Robin.

They played very well, and I sympathized so much with their enjoyment, that I was myself a little disappointed when Orson's aunt appeared with a letter which she said must go to the post-office at once, and asked Orson to carry it:

Now, Orson was her favorite nephew, and I have no doubt she had given him the very ball and bat he was playing with at the moment. She is always making him presents or doing him favors. So, hard as it was for him to leave his sport, I expected to see him, nevertheless, run with the letter, to please one who was constantly doing things to please him. On the contrary, however, he grumbled out, "Can't go now,—I've got Rob here to play with me," and continued pitching the ball.

"It is very important the letter should go to-night," pleaded the aunt. "Come, Orson, dear; then you can play when you come back."

"I don't want to! I can't!" And bounce went the ball again, tossed against the old barn.

"Oh yes, go!" said Robin. "I'll go with you."

But Orson still refused, while the aunt turned back sadly toward the house.

"I'll go alone, then," cried Robin. "Mrs. Woodman! I'll take the letter!" And he ran after her to get it.

"Oh, come, now! You'll spoil all the fun!" growled Orson, who was so angry that he would not go with Robin, but staid about the barn and sulked,—flinging the ball occasionally, and trying to knock it himself,—until his companion returned.

I was walking by again when Robin came back; and I think that if my readers could see what I then saw in the faces of those two boys, it would be a great deal better than anything I can write.

Orson sullen, gloomy, selfish, unhappy.

Robin bright, cheerful, radiant with satisfaction and goodwill,—until he came within the shadow of Orson's discontent.

As I cannot paint this contrast, I may as well make it a text for my "Talk." The world is full of *Orsons*, boys and men; there are, moreover, an *Orson* and a *Robin* in almost every one,—a spirit of selfishness and a spirit of good-will; and I am going to ask each of my young readers to look for these two fellows in himself,—to get rid of the bad company of the one, and to cultivate the society of the other.

There are many subjects which I should like to talk with the boys about; but it seems to me they may be nearly all summed up in that one golden word—*Good-will*. Robin has this beautiful gift, and it makes him helpful and happy. Orson lacks it; and the opposite quality not only renders him miserable, when things do not go to suit him, but gives him the dreadful power of making others uncomfortable. The good spirit will make a brave, generous, upright, manly man of Robin; the bad spirit—if it be not cast out—will make a selfish, unaccommodating, hard, ill-natured man of Orson. Need I ask you, my dear boy, which *you* would rather be?

I have called the good spirit a *gift*: are those, then, to blame who have it not? But I have also said—or meant to say—that every one has it in a greater or less degree, and that all can cultivate it. Easy enough it seems for Robin to give up, for the moment, his own pleasures, and hasten to do a good action; his joy is in it, and he knows that his sports are all the sweeter when, after it, he comes back to them. It is not so easy for Orson, because he thinks too much about himself, in the first place; partly, also, because he is not wise, and does not know the satisfaction there is in generous conduct. Ah! if I could only show him his own portrait, and convince him that even he has a Robin side, which he can show to the world when he will, and make sunshine with it for himself as well as for others!

I suppose you all, my boys, are looking for some sort of success in life; it is right that you should; but what are your notions of success? To get rich as soon as possible, without regard to the means by which your wealth is acquired? There is no true success in that: when you have gained millions, you may yet be poorer than when you had nothing; and it is that same reckless ambition which has brought many a bright and capable boy like you, not to great estate at last, but to miserable failure and disgrace,—not to a palace, but to a prison. Wealth, rightly got and rightly used, rational enjoyment, power, fame,—these are all worthy objects of ambition, but they are not the highest objects, and you may acquire them all



without achieving true success. But if, whatever you seek, you put *good-will* into all your actions, you are sure of the best success at last; for whatever else you gain or miss, you are building up a noble and beautiful character, which is not only the best of possessions in this world, but also is about all you can expect to take with you into the next.

I say, good-will in all your actions. You are not simply to be kind and helpful to others; but, whatever you do, give honest, earnest purpose to it. Thomas is put by his parents to learn a business. But Thomas does not like to apply himself very closely.

"And what's the use?" he says. "I'm not paid much, and I'm not going to work much. I'll get along just as easy as I can, and have as good times as I can."

So he shirks his tasks; and instead of thinking about his employer's interests, or his own self-improvement, gives his mind to trifles—often to evil things, which in their ruinous effects upon his life are not trifles. As soon as he is free from his daily duties, he is off with his companions, having what they call a good time; his heart is with them even while his hands are employed in the shop or store. He does nothing thoroughly well—not at all for want of talent, but solely for lack of good-will. He is not preparing himself to be one of those efficient clerks or workmen who are always in demand, and who receive the highest wages. There is a very different class of people, who are the pest of every community—workmen who do not know their trade, men of business ignorant of the first principles of business. They can never be relied upon to do well any job they undertake. They are always making blunders which other people have to suffer for, and which react upon themselves. They are always getting out of employment, and failing in business. To make up for what they lack in knowledge and thoroughness, they often resort to trick and fraud, and become not merely contemptible, but criminal. Thomas is preparing himself to be one of this class. You cannot, my dear boy, expect to raise a good crop from evil seed.

By Thomas's side works another boy, whom we will call James, a lad of only ordinary capacity, very likely. If Thomas and all the other boys did their best, there would be but small chance for James ever to become eminent. But he has something better than talent; he brings good-will to his work. Whatever he learns, he learns so well that it becomes a part of himself. His employers find that they can depend upon him. Customers soon learn to like and trust him. By diligence, self-culture, good habits, cheerful and kindly conduct, he is laying the foundation of a generous manhood, and of genuine success.

In short, my dear boy, by slighting your tasks, you hurt yourself more than you wrong your employer. By honest service, you benefit yourself more than you help him. If you were aiming at mere worldly advancement only, I should still say that good-will was the very best investment you could make in any business. By cheating a customer, you gain only a temporary and unreal advantage. By serving him with right good-will—doing by him as you would be done by—you not only secure his confidence, but also his good-will in return. But this is a sordid consideration compared with the inward satisfaction, the glow and expansion of soul, which attend a good action, done for itself alone.

Fifty years ago, a young man opened a small dry-goods store in New York. He had been a school-master, but having loaned his money to a friend, in order to start him in business, he was obliged, by his friend's illness, to assume the business himself. On the morning of the opening, he heard his clerk tell a woman that the colors in a piece of calico he was selling would not wash out. He reproved him for the falsehood on the spot.

"You know they are not fast colors; then, why do you say they are?"

"I thought I was here to sell goods," was the clerk's poor excuse.

"So you are," said the employer. "But you are to sell goods for just what they are, not for what they are not. Don't

misrepresent anything, though you never make a sale. Treat every customer just as you would wish to be treated yourself. Ask a fair price for everything, and do not deceive anybody. I believe that is a true principle of business, and I am going to carry it out."

"It is a fine theory," replied the clerk; "but it can't be carried out in any line of business. If you are going to try it, I may as well look for another place, for you won't last long."

The employer did try it, however; and when he died, a short time ago, he left one of the three largest fortunes in America. His name was A. T. Stewart. What became of the clerk I do not know.

Now, I do not mean to hold up Mr. Stewart as an example to be followed by the boys I am talking to. But he is a striking illustration of the fact that deception in trade is not necessary to success. He believed, on the contrary, that in the long run it could only lead to failure. Here is a golden saying from the lips of a man who in fifty years amassed more than fifty millions of dollars:

"I CONSIDER HONESTY AND TRUTH AS GREAT AIDS IN THE GAINING OF FORTUNE."

If such a man, with such wealth, should go still farther, and make *good-will* to his fellow-men the leading motive of his life, what a power he might become, and what a halo of glory would crown his name!

Ah, my boys, what a world it would be if this spirit prevailed in it,—if on every side we met those ready to help and cheer, instead of being compelled always to be on our guard against selfishness and fraud! Now, every one can do his share toward making his own little world such a world. I have known a single brave, manly, generous boy to influence a whole school, so that it became noted for its good manners and good morals. I have also seen a vicious boy taint a whole community of boys with his bad habits, and set them to robbing orchards and birds'-nests, torturing younger children and dumb animals, using bad language and tobacco, and doing a hundred other things which they foolishly mistake for fun.

Good-will should begin at home. How quickly you can tell what sort of spirit reigns among the boys or in the families you visit! In some houses there is constant warfare; at any time of day, you hear loud voices and angry disputes.

"You snatched my apple and ate it up!"

"Touch that trap ag'in, Tom Orcutt, and I 'll give ye somethin' ye can't buy to the 'pothecary's!"

"Ma! sha' n't Sam stop pullin' my hair? He 's pulled out six great handfuls already!"

"He lies! I ha' n't touched his hair!"

"Who 's been stealin' my but'nuts?"

"Pete shot my arrow into the well,—and now sha' n't he make me another?"

Then go into a house where you find peace instead of war, innocent and happy sports instead of rude practical jokes,—and oh, what a difference!

You may always tell a boy's disposition by noticing his treatment of his sisters. A mean and cruel boy delights in tyrannizing over smaller children; but in the presence of stronger boys he can be civil, and even cringing. A cowardly fellow like that is pretty sure to exercise his ill-nature upon the girls at home.

Now, I know that many of the boys I am talking to have far more good-will than they ever show. Their disagreeable ways are the result of long habit and want of thought. The spoiled child is pretty sure to form such ways. He is accustomed to think only of himself, and to have others think chiefly of him. That is the trouble, I suspect, with Orson. Will he, when he reads this, resolve to break up the old bad habit, and cultivate the better spirit that is in him?

By good-will I do not mean simply good-nature. *Good-nature* may sit still and grin. But *good-will* is active, earnest, cheering, helpful.

Ah, my boys, I have told you many stories—and I have no doubt some of you wish I had made this a story instead of a talk. But the real motive of all my stories—the lesson I have always wished to teach in them, but which I am afraid



some of you have overlooked—has been this which I am trying to impress upon you now. If I were to write as many more, the hidden moral lurking in every one of them would be the same. Or if I were now to take leave of you forever, and sum up all I have to say to you in one last word of love and counsel, that one word should be—GOOD-WILL.

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### *THE DOLLS' BABY-SHOW.*

IT all began at a missionary meeting.

“Do you want to make fifty children perfectly happy?” asked Sister Eliza, as we sat there together, we two girls and the sweet, self-denying woman with the peace in her face.

“Of course we do—but how?” was our exclamation; “what do you mean?” And what she meant by making fifty children perfectly happy, and how she thought that we could do this good thing, and how, when we heard about it, we determined to do it, and how we did it, and how the dolls' baby-show came about, and what it really was, and what followed this novel baby-show,—is just what we propose to tell to those who care about making children happy, and who choose to read our story.

It is n't a pleasant thing to have no father, and no mother, and no home by oneself; but to live, fifty children, all together, in a great bare barn of a house, every one with the same gray dress and the same white apron, and not a dolly among them all! Yet this was what Tabitha did, and forty-nine other Tabithas, and Janes, and Elizas, and Carries, Nellies, and Mary Anns, along with her. Poor little Tabitha! She had nobody to love her. When her father and mother died, there was nothing for the neighbors to do but to send her to the orphan asylum of the county, and this was where she was, not many miles from New York itself. There was a great

long room, with columns down the middle; no carpet on the floor; nothing pretty on the walls; twenty-six cold-looking beds straight along the sides,—and this was all the home poor little Tabitha had. Some of the other children were sick and dreadful, and she had n't very good times playing with them. How she would have liked to have a doll! Sometimes she got an old newspaper and twisted it up, or sometimes she made believe with a pillow-case; but if she could only have a real, live doll! A real, live doll!

But there was one bright day every week, and that was the day when Sister Eliza came. She always brought a bright face,—just like sunshine, after they had n't been out for a week, Tabitha thought,—and pleasant words, and goodies. Candy? Bless you, no! These poor little gray ducklings never saw a peppermint stick. But she brought always a little paper of sweet crackers, just enough for two bites all around, and that was pudding, and pie, and candy, and marmalade to them for a whole week. And one day, the very day before Christmas, she came with her brightness and her crackers, and—something else! Something she said that a kind lady had given her, and that they should know all about on Christmas-day. The children wondered what it could be—more crackers? A Christmas-cake? Perhaps only shoes and stockings—everybody sent them shoes and stockings, shoes with the toes out, and stockings with the heels darned, so that they hurt. They talked about nothing else. Tabitha staid awake almost all the night thinking it over, and then dreamed about it till she woke up, Christmas morning.

“'Liza,” said she, to her little bed-neighbor, before she had said “Merry Christmas!” even,—“'Liza, what do you think I dweamed about last night? Oh, I dweamed—oh, it wath such a nice dweam! I dweamed that Sister Sunshine's bundle [that 's what the children called her], that she would n't let us know anythin' about, wath a funny little square box, an' she left it in the closet, an' then I woke up in the middle of the night, an' Santa Clauth he came down the register an' he opened the closet door, an' the little box it grew an' it grew,





"THE CHILDREN STOOD IN LINE, WAITING THEIR TURNS."



an' by an' by it wath a big, *big*, BIG baby-house, an' out came a big doll, an' then a littler doll, and then heaps of littler dolls, an' their heads were all made of sweet crackers, an' they kept dancin' about all 'round in the air with a funny kind o' light about their heads, and one of them came bobbin' up to me an' says, 'Eat me up!' an' I bit off its head, an' I was so sorry, an' I bit my tongue, too; an' I woke up an'—oh-h-h, my goodness! There is a dolly!"

Sure enough, there was a dolly! Not fifty dolls, indeed, but one! A big, funny, rag dolly, tied to the post in the middle of the room, and "Merry Christmas!" written over it. Tabitha's cry had roused up all the other forty-nine children from the twenty-six white beds, and in an instant they had all jumped out,—all but the two little sick ones in beds by themselves, who could n't get up at all,—and were dancing around the post in their night-gowns, trying to get a hug at the 'most suffocated doll. Such a noise they made, and such a quarrel they began to get into,—yes, a quarrel even on Christmas morning,—that the matron came running in, and actually took the dolly away. The poor, disappointed faces! But after breakfast they were to have the doll again, and each child, the matron said, should have it five minutes for her very own. The children who came next actually stood in line waiting their turns, and by the time each of them had given the poor doll fifty hugs and thirty kisses apiece, it was so worn to pieces that it did not seem as though it could live through the night, the matron said. In the midst of it, in came Sister Sunshine herself, and such a welcome as she had. Presently little Tabitha crept up to her and told her her dream.

"I fink it 's weal nice to dweem," said Tabitha, "when you can't have things weally and twuly; an' when I waked up and saw that dear dolly, I thought my dweam had weally come twue. Only it does take so long to go wound, and I only had it such a little bit of a minute to myself."

"Dear little souls!" said Sister Eliza to herself; "next Christmas you shall have a dolly each to yourself." And this was how she was to make fifty children "*per*-fectly happy."

Meanwhile, the dolly lived in the orphan asylum with the fifty children. She was almost bigger than the smallest child, and the matron always called her "Fifty-one," so that this got to be her name. By and by one of the little sick children died, on Easter day, and when summer came, two new children were brought in; but dolly staid "Fifty-one." One doll to fifty children! Fifty dolls to one child would not be so very remarkable,—the every-day doll, and grandmother's doll, and the doll Aunt Lottie brought from Paris, and the boy doll she was married to, and the rag-baby, and all the paper dolls that are its lineal descendants! This one dolly had a hard time of it. She had so much hugging that it gave her the chromatics, which is a curious doll disease, when they get very black and blue and dirty-like, particularly in the face, and the feet begin to drop off, and the stuffing (if it's a stuffed doll) comes out. Her best friend would n't have recognized her; but she lived a whole year, and to these poor little children, who had no "folks" of their own, she was papa, mamma, and brother and sister, all together. They actually remembered her in their prayers, and one queer little girl made a rhyme, which they said after "Now I lay me":

"And till the birds wake up the sun,  
Dear Lord, take care of Fifty-one!"

Every time that Sister Eliza saw the doll, it put her in mind of her promise. That was how we came into the story. She asked us if we could n't get our friends to give us fifty dolls—old ones the girls did not want; and we thought we could, and said we would. But we had forgotten a very important matter—that nobody ever saw, or heard of, or dreamt of a single, solitary doll, brainless or headless, banged or stuffingless, without arms or without feet, that its little mother did not cling to as "her own dear child." So we began to take up contributions for new dollies, when a generous friend sent us—as a Christmas gift for the poor—the dollies themselves, fifty and to spare, packed like sardines in boxes of six, and all of them twins. So alike, indeed, that you could

only tell them apart by their boots, which were pink, and green, and blue, and black, and almost any color you can think of.

And now the dolls began to start on their travels, for we had engaged all our friends as doll-dressmakers, and the dress-makers lived pretty much all over the country. The dolls went by cars, they went by boat, they went by pocket. One found her way to Staten Island, where was a little girl who wanted to dress at least one, and she came back as though she had been to Paris and had her dress made by the man dress-maker, Worth—a real Miss Flora McFlimsey. Presently the door-bell began to ring at all sorts of hours, and they all came trooping, one after another, “back to mamma’s, home again!” Now you could tell them apart easily; here was a French *bonne*, with her white cap and white apron; here a black-hooded nun; here a little boy in a Scottish suit; here two sailor laddies; another dressed just like Sister Eliza herself; and still another in the gray gown of the asylum children they were all to visit. If those dolls could only have told the stories of their travels, what a book they would make!

So the dolls were all home again, waiting for Christmas morning. You could n’t go anywhere in the house but a new doll would seem to pop out. And then everybody said we must have a baby-show. We wanted to give the fifty children some candy, too, and make their cold, bare room pretty, for once, with Christmas-greens, and now the dolls themselves should earn the money to buy their mammas candy. Then came the show!

“Walk in, ladies and gentlemen; only ten cents admission, to see the prize baby, and the biggest baby in the world, and the smallest baby in the world, and every one the best baby in the world,—ten cents admission, fifty babies, five for a cent,—walk in, ladies and gentlemen,” said the manageress, a Mrs. Jarley with doll-babies instead of wax-works, to those who gave their tickets at our parlor door. And such a show of babies! Shawls and sashes, hung around the walls, served as screens and decorations, and ranged around were not only the

fifty dollies themselves, but lots of other dollies who had been sent in as prize babies. As they could n't tell their own names, placards did it for them. Here were "other people's children," mischievous as "Budge and Toddie," but quiet as mice. Over them was the little girl who was "born with a silver spoon in her mouth," dressed as fine as a fiddle, and next to her the one "born with no spoon at all," in sober homespun. "The convalescent" sat up in her tiny bed, looking as pretty as a pink. Opposite to her was "a child of the dark ages"—a dreadful rag-baby thing, made of a pillow and a black mask, with curls of carpenters' shavings. And in the back room were the talking midgets,—“no extra charge,”—for the two boys had covered a table with a sheet, and dressed up their hands as doll-babies, which stood on the table, while they hid themselves underneath, and asked conundrums, and answered questions from the audience.

The baby-show was a success; we counted the money after each new-comer bought a ticket, and the last time of counting we had eight dollars and forty cents. This bought us fifty fine large cornucopias, and candy to fill them all, and a great bundle of Christmas-greens. What fun we had buying the candy, and filling the horns! And when Christmas-eve at last came, the fifty dolls said good-bye, marched out of the house into an expressman's carriage, and so rode off to the asylum.

Fifty dolls had never been seen there before, and their arrival created a grand excitement. But they were kept quiet from the children till Christmas morning, and on Christmas morning they woke up to find the great room dressed with greens, the Star in the East at one end and at the other the Cross, and festoons of greenery all between, and a dolly and candy for each one. Tabitha's dream had come true. Her bed-neighbor, 'Liza, was no longer there; they had found for her a home in the great, far West, where kind people would take care of her until she grew up to be a little serving-maid—to milk the cows and help about the house. But little Tabitha told her dream to 'Lisbeth, who had taken 'Liza's



place, and hugged and squeezed her dolly, "her very own all the whole time." And so each of the fifty dolls found a new mamma and each of fifty children was made "*per*-fectly happy." Only most of them ate their candy so all at once that the doctor had to come next day, and give them each a dreadful dose of medicine.

Sister Eliza and we two girls came later in the day,—and did we laugh or did we cry? Both, I think. The children were most of them not pretty and not bright,—not very merry, even,—and we could not but think of the prettier, and brighter, and happier children we knew. One little sick child with red, weak eyes hugged her dolly tight, as though she could n't have so good a time very long.

"Well, you 've got your dolly at last; you 're always hugging up some bundle or other," said the nurse.

The days are dull for these poor things—they have not much to brighten them; we were very glad we had made the Star in the East shine once into their lives with Christmas brightness.

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### A FEW OF OUR HABITS.

YOU have heard it said a great many times that we are all "creatures of habit," have you not? And probably you have taken for granted that the statement is true, without really stopping to think how very true it is, and how much habits have to do in forming our characters and preparing us to be useful, interesting, and agreeable men and women.

As we every one of us know, it is very easy to fall into a habit (particularly if it is a bad one), and exceedingly hard to climb out of it again; each repetition of an action lessens the difficulty of its performance, until finally we act without any conscious effort of mind, and by that time our habit is formed; therefore, it is necessary to keep our eyes wide open, and

watch that no bad habit creeps upon us unawares, for, after we are once in its power, some pretty hard fighting is required on our parts to overthrow the enemy. Some writer has said, "The chains of habit are generally too small to be felt until they are too strong to be broken"; but a determined will can file through even these mightily forged links.

How many of you know what procrastination means? It is a very common habit, especially among little girls and boys, and most of them act it a great many times each day, when they wait "just a little while" before doing any duty that ought to be performed immediately. I have a little friend twelve years old who is always getting into trouble through this fault, though she has firmly resolved to conquer it, and I think is really trying her best to do so.

When school began, a few months ago, she hoped there would be no time to practice in the short afternoons, for that was something she could not bear to do; great was her disappointment, then, when papa remarked:

"Nina, you will get home at three o'clock each day, and you must always manage to practice a full hour before dark."

The little girl intended to obey, but often she lingered over her dinner until mamma had to call down-stairs:

"Go to the piano now, Nina, and waste no more time."

"Yes, ma'am, I'm going," is the answer, but first her hands must be washed; then she stops to tell nurse something funny that happened in school, and the baby laughs and crows in such an irresistible way that Nina says:

"Oh, I must play with him just a minute."

Of course, after the romp, her hair needs smoothing, and the little girl thinks, "I may just as well braid it all over—it wont take much longer"; then she perhaps remembers that grandma forgot to give her any fruit for dinner, so off she runs to ask for some; the hands must then be washed again, and while that ceremony is being gone through, company comes in to see her mother, and the parlor is occupied until it is too late to go to the piano that day.

When papa comes home, his first question is:

"Well, little daughter, have you practiced your hour?"

And Nina hangs her head, and explains that she had put it off until all her afternoon was wasted.

Then for punishment she would have to go to bed at seven o'clock instead of eight, and rise a whole hour earlier than everybody else next morning, in order to make up the practice lost the day before.

Another frequent habit among both girls and boys, as well as among grown-up people, is exaggeration, or the use of much stronger language than the occasion warrants. If you are telling some little occurrence that you have seen, or repeating a story that has been told you, do not try to make it any more startling or marvelous than it really is, but adhere closely to the truth, regardless of effect. I have known persons to become so confirmed in the habit of exaggeration that it finally became impossible for them to give a simple fact correctly, and though they did not intend telling falsehoods, and would have been shocked to know they were guilty of anything so wrong, they really were considered untruthful people by many of their acquaintances, and were disliked and distrusted in consequence.

Try to speak the exact truth in little things. If you say the dust is perfectly "frightful," when it is simply annoying, and the cold is "awful," when it merely makes your cheeks tingle, what meaning will be in the words you use to speak of a great railroad accident, or steam-boat disaster, or the burning of some theater where hundreds of people are mangled, crushed, and killed? Teach yourselves to employ simple forms of expression for simple occurrences, then the words you use will always have fitness and meaning.

I wonder how many of you little people (or big people either, for that matter) would be willing to have your top bureau-drawer put on exhibition without any warning! I fancy I see a smile curling the corners of several small mouths at that question. Now is the time to begin, if you ever wish to be an orderly, systematic man or woman; remember the simple rule so often quoted: "Have a place for everything, and

keep everything in its place"; and though at first you will have some trouble in following it strictly, the good habit of order will soon be formed, and you and your friends will be spared a great deal of annoyance and discomfort.

An exceedingly good habit to fall into is that of thoroughness. Never be satisfied with a piece of work, of any description, unless you have done it just as well as you "possibly" could; for people who do things thoroughly are "such" a comfort in this world of carelessness—a comfort to themselves, and a comfort to all who come in contact with them; their work never has to be done over again, but is always satisfactory. This little virtue can be cultivated in every act of your lives—at home and in school, in dusting a room, making a doll-dress, studying, or practicing a music lesson. If builders should not be particular to put every brick in the exact place it ought to occupy, our houses would fall down upon our heads; and if some little piece of machinery should be carelessly made in the engines of our trains and steam-boats, the consequence would be railroad wrecks and explosions every day. So you see how necessary it is for the safety of our lives that men should be trained to do their work thoroughly; and if the habit is not formed during youth, it is almost an impossibility to acquire it in after life, when men find it hard to learn new ways.

Now I have suggested several habits—some bad, to get out of, and others good, to get into; and I will end by telling you of another, which is worth more than a fortune to the boy or girl who will take the trouble to form it, for with "perseverance" one can gain almost any good thing in life that he or she desires. Patient perseverance conquers almost all difficulties. Just try for yourselves, and see if it does not. This habit can be gained while you are working for the other good ones of which I have spoken, and I am sure that will be a very nice way to begin its cultivation.

Suppose you all adopt the plan of writing on a sheet of paper the bad habits you have, and the good ones you wish to exchange them for. Then pin the list on the inside of your



bedroom door, and read it over carefully every morning before breakfast; this will help you to remember through the day the position, advantages, and disadvantages of the battlefield, and you will be better prepared to guard against a surprise from the enemy.

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*ALWAYS BEHINDHAND.*

SUPPER was ready and waiting. Our guest had not arrived, but there was another train an hour later. Should the family wait for my friend, or should I alone, who was the personage especially to be visited? My father paced the floor nervously, as was his wont when he felt disturbed. He had the evening papers to read, and he never opened them until after tea. This was a habit of his. He was very fixed—or, as some express it, “set”—in his little ways. It was Bridget’s evening out, and she had begun to show a darkened visage. Bridget was no friend to “company,” and it was policy to conciliate her. So the family seated themselves at the table, and I sat near, waiting until brother John should be ready to accompany me a second time to the station.

“What about this young lady friend of yours, Nelly?” asked my father. “Is she one of the unreliable sort—a little addicted to tardiness, that is?”

“I am obliged to confess, papa, that at boarding-school, where I longest knew Jeannette, she was inclined to be dilatory; but that was years ago. It is to be hoped that she has changed since then.”

“I should wish to have very little to do with a behindhand person,” said my father, shaking his head very gravely.

“Oh, papa!” I remonstrated, “you will not condemn a dear friend for one single fault. Jeannette is beautiful and accomplished, sensible and good-tempered. Everybody thinks she is splendid.”

"She may have very pleasant qualities, but I tell you, girls," he added, with sudden emphasis, "that a want of punctuality vitiates the whole character. No one is good for much who cannot be depended upon; and what dependence is to be placed on a man who is not up to his engagements? In business, such a man is nowhere; and in social life a dawdling, dilatory man or woman is simply a pest. But mind, my child, I am not characterizing your friend; we cannot tell about her till we see."

The later train brought my friend. She was profuse in her regrets; she had been belated by a mistake in the time; her watch was slow. As she was pouring forth a torrent of regrets and apologies, I observed my father bestowing glances of evident admiration at the fair speaker, while the rich color came and went in her cheeks, and her eyes kindled with animation. Truly, beauty covers a multitude of faults. Sister Bell, who was as punctual as my father, was appeased, and promised to take care of the tea-things and let Bridget go out. My father good-naturedly offered to regulate the halting watch by the true time.

To her chamber we went together, to talk as girls do talk when they meet in this way, after a long separation. Folding me in her arms, she told me all about her recent engagement to George Allibone; showed me her engagement-ring, and her lover's photograph. It was a noble head, finely poised, and a most engaging face, and my ready and cordial admiration was a new bond of sympathy. It took nearly until midnight to say all that we girls, aged twenty, had to say to each other; and this, in addition to the fatigues of travel, was accepted as an excuse for Jenny's tardiness at breakfast. She really had meant to be early.

But this was only the beginning. Throughout the whole three weeks of her visit, she was scarcely punctual in a single case where time was definitely appointed. She was late in rising, late at meals, late at church and for excursions, and, to our profound mortification, late for dinner appointments, even when parties were made especially on her account. She

seemed sorry and mortified, but on each occasion she would do the same thing over again.

"What *can* she be doing?" my mother sometimes asked in perplexity, when my sister and I were ready and waiting.

"Doing her hair, mother," we answered; "and she will do it over until it suits her, be it early or late."

"Oh, these hair-works!" sighed my mother. "How much tardiness at church and elsewhere is due to over-fastidious hair-dressing! What is that line of good George Herbert's? 'Stay not for the other pin.' I think he must have meant hair-pins."

My sister and I sometimes agreed between ourselves to compel her to readiness by standing by, to help her in her preparations; but in vain. She must write a letter or finish a story before making her toilet. Why not accomplish the toilet first, to be sure of it—any time remaining, for the other purposes? She did n't *like* to do so. No philosopher could tell why. It is an unaccountable, mysterious something rooted deep in some people's natures—this aversion of being before-hand. I have seen it in other people since the time when it so puzzled and troubled me in Jenny. It marred the pleasure of the visit most miserably. I was continually fearing the displeasure of my father and the discomfort of my mother. The whole household were disturbed by what seemed to them downright rudeness.

"Now, Jenny," I would plead, "do be early, dear, when papa comes with the carriage. It annoys him dreadfully to wait."

She would promise to "try."

"But pray, Jenny, why need you have to try? It is easy enough. For my part, I never will make any one wait for me. I go without being ready, if need be, or I stay behind."

I had come to talk very plainly to her, out of love and good-will, as well as, sometimes, from vexation of spirit. For the twentieth time she would tell me how truly she had meant to be punctual in some given case, and that she should have

been so but that she was hindered when nearly ready by some unforeseen occurrence.

"But, my dear, unforeseen hinderances will often occur, and you must lay your account with them, and give yourself extra time. You will run the risk of meeting some great calamity by trusting, as you do, to the last minute."

And the calamity did befall her. Mr. Allibone spent a day with us. We were anticipating with great pleasure a second visit, when a telegram arrived, requesting Jenny to meet him in Boston on the succeeding morning. A business emergency had summoned him abroad very suddenly, and he was to embark for Liverpool in the evening.

We all sympathized with Jenny in the startling effect of this sudden announcement, and offered her every sort of help when the hour for her departure was at hand. She had only to compose herself and prepare for the journey. Sister Bell would arrange her hair and bring her dress, and she would be spared all effort. She seemed grateful, but was sure she could be ready without troubling any one. She dreamed not how much she was, even then, troubling us, for we were beginning to tremble lest she should somehow manage to be late for this, her only train.

She kissed us all twice over when the hackman arrived at the door; but, suddenly glancing in the mirror and observing how ashen was her usually brilliant complexion, she declared against wearing the gray cashmere in which she was dressed, of a hue so like her face. George must not meet her thus. She seized her black silk, with which, in spite of remonstrances, she proceeded to array herself. There was time enough; the carriage must surely be too early. Alas! for the ripping out of gathers, in the violence of her haste, and for the loopings of her skirt, not to be dispensed with! Horses could not be made to do the work of five minutes in three.

She saw the cars move off without her!

No words were called for. My mother carried a glass of elderberry wine to the poor girl, and left her alone to her tears. They would do her good.



We ourselves needed rest, after the troubled scene of hurry and excitement, and we sat down, feeling as if a whirlwind had passed.

"It is beyond my comprehension," said my father, when he came home to dinner. "I can understand tardiness," he continued, categorically, "as the result of indolence. Lazy people dread effort and postpone it. There is a man in my employ who continues to work sometimes after hours. The men tell me that he is actually too lazy to leave off work and put away his tools. But Miss Jeannette seems active and energetic."

"She miscalculates, papa," I said. "She always imagines there is plenty of time until the last minute."

"But herein is the mystery," persisted my father. "Whence this *uniformity* of dereliction? Why not sometimes too early and sometimes just in the right time, instead of always and everywhere late, and making others late?"

"Poor girl!" said my mother, whose compassion was uppermost. "I pity her with all my heart; yet it is not a case of life and death. This trial may be attended with beneficial results. We will hope so."

I am sorry that this hope was apparently not to be realized. The lesson failed to be read aright. Jeannette recovered her serenity, and resumed her tardy ways. A yet severer lesson was needed, and it came.

The steamer in which, after an absence of ten or twelve weeks, George Allibone was to embark for home, was lost, and not a passenger saved.

My father took me at once to my poor stricken friend, in her distant home. Pale and dumb with grief, yet with tearless eyes, she let us take her almost lifeless hand. From her bloodless lips came only the low, anguished cry, "If only I had said farewell!"

What comfort in words? We offered none. My father's eyes brimmed over, and my heart was breaking for my poor Jeannette.

But relief came speedily. The joyful news was received that George was safe, having made a necessary change in his

plans, and would arrive in a fortnight. Jeannette came up from the depths. What should her thank-offering be? She made the resolution to become at once faithful to her appointments, prompt and reliable. It was not that she would *try*—she would speak the commanding words, “I will.”

She has kept her resolution. Writing to me, after a lapse of years, she said: “You will hardly know your dilatory friend. I remember and practice your advice of former years, to be first ready for my appointments, and to reserve other work for the interval of waiting after I am ready. It is surprising how often I find not a moment left for waiting. Still I feel the old tendency to procrastinate, and I am obliged steadfastly to resist it. ‘Delays are dangerous,’ as our old writing-copies used to run; the sentiment is hackneyed, but oh, how true! George says he owes you ten thousand thanks for your faithful counsel, and we shall speak them when you make us the visit of which we feel so sure, because your promises, as I well know, are faithfully kept.”

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### GRANDMOTHER.

FOR a long time I did not understand it at all. I thought that, because grandmothers were often feeble and old-fashioned, they could never really feel as we children do; that they needed no particular notice or enjoyment, for it was their nature to sit in rocking-chairs and knit. They seemed quite different from the rest of the world, and not to be especially thought about—that is, by girls who were as full of merry plans as we were.

Grandmother lived with us, as father was her only son. We had a vague idea that she helped mother mend the clothes and knitted all father's stockings, besides some pairs for the church society. We were supposed to love her, of course, and were never openly rude, for, indeed, we had been taught to be polite

to all aged persons. As for grandmother, she was one of those peaceful souls who never make any trouble, but just go on their own way so quietly that you hardly know they are in the house. Mother sat with her sometimes, but we girls, in our gay, busy pursuits, rarely thought of such a thing. She seemed to have no part in our existence. It went on so for some time, till one day I happened at sundown to go into the sitting-room, and there sat grandmother, alone. She had fallen asleep in her chair by the window. The sun was just sinking out of sight, leaving a glory of light as he went down, and in this glory I saw my grandmother—saw her really for the first time in my life. She had been reading her Bible, and then, as if there had been no need of reading more, since its treasure already lay shining in her soul, she had turned the book over upon her lap and leaned back to enjoy the evening. I saw it all in a moment,—her gentleness, her patience, her holiness. Then, while her love and beautiful dignity seemed to fold about me like a bright cloud, the sweet, every-day lines in her face told me a secret, that even then in the wonderful sunset of life she was oh, how human! So human that she missed old faces and old scenes; so human that she needed a share of what God was giving us—friends, home interests, little surprises and expectations, loving offices, and, above all, a recognition in the details of our fresh young lives. Girls! when grandmother woke up, she found us all three stealing softly into the room, for God helped me when I went to tell my sisters about it. Mary only kissed her, and asked if she had had a good nap; Susie picked her ball of yarn off the carpet where it had rolled, and began to wind it, all the while telling her a pleasant bit of news about one of the school-girls; and I—well, I knelt down at grandmother's feet, and, just as I was going to cry, I gave her knees a good, hard hug, and told her she was a darling.

That 's all, girls. But it 's been different ever since from what it was before.

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*READY FOR EUROPE.*

A GOOD many of you girls who read this will go to Europe some day or other. Just now, perhaps, you don't think or care much about it; but by and by, when you are older, and hear people who have been there talk of their doings and seeings, the desire to go will strengthen, and you will wish it very much indeed. There are some persons who will tell you that this desire is foolish and wrong; that going to Europe is just now the fashion, and silly folks who like to follow the fashions go for that reason. But I think this a mistake. To travel anywhere, intelligently, has a great deal of education in it, and for an American to go to Europe, where is so much we cannot as yet have in our own country, is education of the very best sort.

I want, therefore, to talk about this journey which some of you are to take, and the way in which to get the greatest good and pleasure out of it. This is not to make any one discontented who cannot go. That would be a pity, indeed. But nobody knows beforehand what their chances are going to be; and as business, or sickness, or unforeseen changes of various kinds may bring the opportunity to any of you when it is least looked for, it will not be lost time to get ready to take advantage of it should it come. Then, if it never comes, you will at least have had the improvement of getting ready, which in itself is a very good thing.

First, then, let us decide what it is that makes it worth while to go at all. To be amused, to buy pretty things, and have what you girls call "a good time," is not enough. Good times and shopping and amusement are to be had in America; it would scarcely pay to cross the Atlantic in search of them, though they are nice things to catch at by the way. A great many do go with no other wish or idea in their minds; but something higher there must be, or the wise would not follow their example.

To begin with, then: there are better chances for study in certain branches than we can have at home. The most famous



masters for music and painting live in Europe, and languages can be acquired there more readily and perfectly than with us. To pick up French or German by the ear, as a little child does, is indeed learning made easy. It is thus that children on the Continent are taught. It is nothing uncommon to find a girl of eighteen who speaks and thinks equally well in four or five tongues. She has had a French nurse, and a German, and an Italian; or has gone to school in the different countries; and as people about her are using the languages continually, her chance for practice is perpetual, and a good accent comes without trouble. Each little Russian boy, when admitted to the Government schools, is required to speak French and German; and Russian parents often carry their families to spend a year or two in France and Germany, so that they may absorb languages, as it were, without knowing that there is any difficulty in the matter.

But apart from actual study,—for some of you will not have time for that,—there is great and constant instruction to be gained by what you see. We read in books about wonderful things, such as cathedrals, temples, Alpine scenery, Raphael's Madonnas; but, however hard we try, we cannot distinctly picture them until we see. One hour spent in a real cathedral teaches more of the true meaning and glory of architecture than weeks spent over books. One glance at a snow-peak sets an image in our brain which never could have been there without that glance. I once heard a lady say that she was sure she knew just how Mont Blanc must look, because it was just twice and a half as high as Mount Washington, and she could easily imagine two and a half Mount Washingtons piled on top of one another, and covered with snow! But when she came to see the actual Mont Blanc, she found that none of her imaginary pilings-up had in the least prepared her for the look of the real thing.

Then, it is not only certain great objects which are made real to us by seeing them, but also everything, however small, which we have learned about or been told of. We read Hume and Gibbon, and that this or that happened in such a year or

such a reign, but it is all dim and fabulous, and must be, so long as it is merely a statement on a printed page. One visit to the Tower or the Forum makes a sudden change. The fabulous becomes distinct. It is like sunlight flashing into a dusky corner. And the best of all is, that the sunlight stays; and facts never go off again into the vague distance where they were before, but remain near and clear forever to your mind.

I want to warn you of one disagreeable thing sure to happen, which is, that the minute you visit any of these celebrated places, a sharp and mortifying sense of ignorance will take possession of you. "Dear me, who *was* Guy, Earl of Warwick?" you will ask yourself. "And Lady Jane Grey's father, — I can't recollect his name at all, — and why was it that they cut off her head?" Then the guide will lead the way into a dark cell, and tell you it was Sir Walter Raleigh's bed-chamber during his long imprisonment, and you will conjure up a vague recollection of the great Sir Walter, as a young man flinging his cloak down before the Queen, and will long to know more, except that the party is moving on, and you are ashamed to ask. Or, if it is in Rome that you happen to be sight-seeing, you will trip down the long steps which lead into the great Forum, and look at the beautiful groups of columns and the broken arches, and all at once it will come to you with a shock that you know nothing at all about the Forum; that up to this time it has only been a name in your memory. In a general way, you have gathered that it was the place where the Roman senators and people met to discuss public matters, but it does n't look in the least as you had expected it would; and besides, you hear of other forums, many others, in different parts of the city, and instead of enjoying intelligently, you stand bewildered and confused, and listen helplessly while some one reads a few bald pages of Murray's guide-book; and the guide explains what he does n't know, in Italian which you don't understand. You long to go straight home, hunt up the proper books, study the subject well, and then come back and see the Forum again. But, alas! the books are in the home book-case in America, and the Roman Circulating Library

seems to have nothing in it but novels; and even if it had, what time could you find to read where there is so much to be seen and done? All that is left is for you to put the matter aside, with a dull, unsatisfied feeling, and resolve to find out about it when you can; but before that time comes, the full, fresh interest will have worn off. And oh! what a pity it was that you could not have been prepared before you went there!

Every traveler feels this want at times, even the best-educated ones, for no education is so complete as to prepare its owner on all points and against all surprises. What the ill-educated ones lose cannot be calculated! It is like voyaging with one eye blinded and the other half-shut. You see, hear, feel only a little piece of things, impressions enter your brain only part way, and what with the puzzle and vexation at your own ignorance and the sting of a missed opportunity, you go about with so much annoyance in your mind that you but half enjoy the delightful chance which perhaps will never be yours to enjoy again.

So, dear girls, take my advice, and while you have libraries and leisure, and people ready to explain things, and a mind free to receive the explanations, get yourselves ready to profit by what may come. You will be very glad afterward. Every subject carefully looked into, every bit of history tucked away into its proper place in your memory, every little interesting fact, every cell made ready for the reception of mental honey, will prove, when the right moment comes, a thing to be thankful for. Each scrap of French, or Italian, or German will find its place; each hard word, which seems so dry now, will be useful then; every fragment of scientific knowledge—nothing will be lost or valueless, and the most casual and unlikely thing may turn out to be a friend at need and a friend indeed.

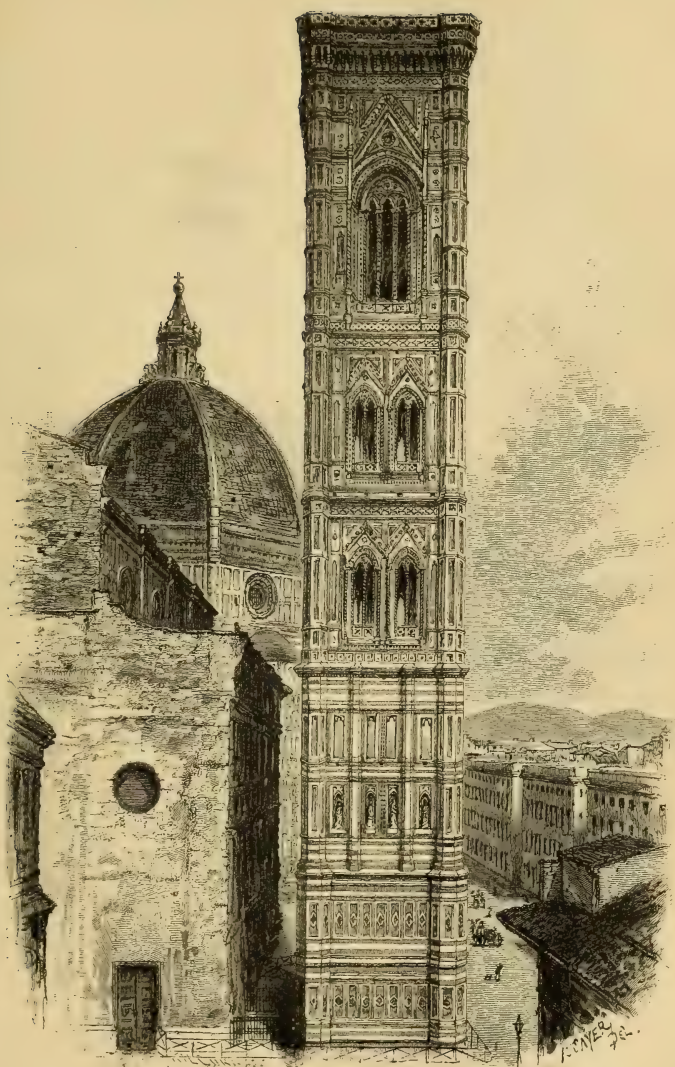
If you go in Rome to see the mosaic works belonging to the Government, you will find that the great pictures which you have admired on the walls of St. Peter's are made up of an immense number of small bits of stone and marble, chosen for their color, and fitted each into exactly its prepared place.

The mosaic workers who make the pictures would never think of beginning till the bits of marble were all ready, polished and sorted out. It would be awkward indeed to stop in the middle of the work, because there was no blue left with which to finish the Madonna's eye, or to leave a hole in the Saint's robe for the lack of half a dozen little red stones.

I want you to imitate their carefulness, and get ready these precious small bits of knowledge before the time comes to work them into the beautiful whole. Then, when the great chance arrives, your material will be ready, and, fitting one with another, a valuable thing will grow of them, which will be yours for life. But don't let the pattern be spoiled for lack of a tiny scrap of this or that which you have not had the forethought to prepare in time.

And just one thing more. Let your minds grow as fast as they will, but let your souls grow, too. Don't go about regarding the nations of the earth in general as "queer foreigners," who must be undervalued and scorned because their ways are not like our own. To us our own ways seem best, but there is good everywhere, and things are not necessarily ridiculous because they differ from those which we are accustomed to. And then, though you must n't think I want to preach, God has made all men of one family, and, in spite of varieties of complexion, tastes, and habits, all have the same needs, the same human nature, the same death to die, the same Everlasting Father, and so all, in a sense, are brothers and sisters to each other. This thought going along with you, charity, patience, and kindness will go too; blessed fellow-travelers these, and good helpers on the road. Your mind will widen, your sympathies grow big, and all the world become wonderful and delightful, as it must always be to people whose hearts are large enough to take it in. After a journey made in this spirit, you will come back, as American girls should come, not merely with Paris bonnets and Genoese filigree, but sweeter and stronger than when you went away; wiser, too, and better fitted to see the meanings of things at home, and take your place as dwellers in a free land. For, beautiful, and instruct-





GIOTTO'S CAMPANILE, OR BELL-TOWER, IN FLORENCE.



ive, and full of charm as Europe is, to be an American in the true sense of the word is better yet; and I hope you will all continue to feel that, however many times you go abroad.

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WHY NELLIE WAS NOT POPULAR.

“WELL, Nellie, what is the matter?” asked Miss Percy, as she seated herself in a straw rocker on the piazza, where Nellie sat, chin in hand, pouting over a portfolio of prints that lay outspread before her.

“I ’m mad!” was the reply.

“Mad! That is distressing. I hope you don’t bite.”

“Oh, of course I don’t mean *that!*” said Nellie, turning away from the pictures with an injured air. “I am vexed!”

“Then why did you say *mad?*”

“Oh, you are so particular, Aunt Alice! What do you think Kate Sibley has done?”

“I cannot imagine.”

“Her mother gave her leave to invite three of the girls to go with her to the picnic in Cedar Creek, and she asked the Morrisons, and Minnie DuBose, and left me out, though I have worked every one of her examples ever since we have been in denominate numbers. It is just the way with them all. I do everything they ask me to do, and they all hate me. I’ll be even with them, though—I’ll hate them, too.”

And the future misanthrope began to sniffle and use her pocket-handkerchief.

“Don’t you think it would be a wiser plan to make them love you?” asked Miss Percy, gravely.

“I can’t do it,” replied a choky voice from behind the handkerchief. “I have tried, but I ca-an’t. They all like Rosa Guignard, who never does anything for anybody, but—but——”

As Nellie did not seem able to finish what she wished to say, Miss Percy came to her relief by observing, quietly :

"The girls all like Rosa on account of a very rare gift which she possesses."

"Rose Guignard gifted !" exclaimed Nellie, surprised into forgetfulness of her wrongs. "Why, Aunt Alice, she is 'way down in all her classes, and you know she is n't pretty—that is, until you get used to her."

"But it is a much rarer gift than either intellect or beauty, that which Rosa possesses," returned Miss Percy.

Nellie's red-rimmed eyes asked a question to which Miss Percy replied with brevity, "Tact."

"Tact ? What is that ?" asked Nellie.

"I don't know any better definition of the word than one a great novelist has given : 'Tact is knowing what not to say.'"

"Don't *I* know what not to say, Aunt Alice ?" asked Nellie, after a short silence.

"No, my dear ; I don't think you do. You will take offense, probably, if I give you a few examples as proofs of this ; but as I am in your mother's place this summer, I shall take the liberty of speaking plainly. Do you remember who were in the company yesterday when you coolly asserted that 'the Roman Catholic religion was nothing but mummery,' and went on to observe that, for your part, you looked upon a Romanist as no better than a Mohammedan, or a Jew ?"

"There were so many—such a roomful—that I cannot—Oh, Aunt Alice ! I do remember now ! Mademoiselle Durand was here, and she is a Romanist. I am so sorry !"

"And Miss Lyons was here also, and she is a devout Jewess. Did you notice that she kissed Kate Sibley when she went away, and did *not* kiss you ?"

"Yes ; and I wondered what was the matter. But mademoiselle kissed me."

"Yes, mademoiselle kissed you, although the flush had not died out of her cheeks which your thoughtless words had called up ; and thereby showed herself to be, what Miss Lyons is not, a follower of Him who, *when He was reviled, reviled not again.*"



"Well, Aunt Alice, I did n't *mean* any harm; and you know everybody makes mistakes once in a while."

"But you make mistakes a great deal oftener than other people do. Shall I give some other instances of your not setting a watch on your lips?"

"If you like."

"Don't be sulky about it. I am 'cruel only to be kind.' When we were told the other evening that Miss Collins had small-pox, you immediately declared that if you were in her place you would rather die at once than get well and be a fright all the rest of your life. It was too dark on the porch to see the expression on Miss Adger's deeply scarred face, but I remember that lady's next remark was, 'I can't endure pert children.'"

"You can't expect me to see in the dark," muttered Nellie.

"No; but you ought to have remembered Miss Adger's presence. And you have not darkness for an excuse for what you said yesterday before Miss Pratt—that you believed all red-haired persons had bad tempers."

"Of course, I meant present company excepted."

"It would have been better not to mention red hair at all in Miss Pratt's presence, as her hair, though beautiful, is decidedly of a reddish tint. You made another blunder yesterday, and I think if old Dr. Manning had had Elisha's power, you would have stood in considerable danger of being torn to pieces by the bears after your facetious remark on the subject of bald heads."

"Oh, I never thought about *his* being bald!"

"But, my dear child, these are matters that *ought* to be thought about. Let me give you one plain, simple rule, Nellie: *Never remind any one of his or her personal defects.*"

"I'll try to remember that."

"There is another thing you would do well to remember—that comparisons are odious. When Kate Sibley played the 'Beautiful Blue Danube Waltzes' for me the other evening, it was scarcely polite in you to exclaim, as soon as she had finished, 'Oh, Aunt Alice, you ought to hear Minnie DuBose

play that! She does play it *beautifully!*' Later in the evening, when I asked Kate for the 'Étude Mazurka,' she replied, 'Oh, you must wait and get Minnie DuBose to play that, as Nellie says *she* does play beautifully.'"

"Resentful creature! Well, at any rate, I have never said anything against Kate's *looks*."

"No; on the contrary, I once heard you remark, in the presence of a dozen of her school-mates, that she was *by far* the prettiest girl in Mr. Radford's school; but then you went on to qualify your praise by coolly observing, 'However, I don't think that is saying *much* for her.' You showed more temerity than I imagined even *you* were possessed of in giving so many young girls to understand that you did not consider them at all pretty."

"Well, I *don't* think them pretty."

"Nor interesting either. At least, so I judged the other night when, as they were going away, you observed, yawningly, 'Only ten o'clock! I thought it was a great deal later than that.' You are an unselfish child, Nellie, and always ready to give up your own pleasure to oblige your friends; but you will never be popular until you learn to bear this in mind, that, although it is always wrong to tell falsehoods, it does not follow that it is always right to tell uncalled-for truths."

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### CHILDREN WHO WORK.

LOOKING up with one of the sweetest little smiles in her baby-face, a small girl, perhaps seven or eight years of age, replied to my question:

"I work at feathers."

Hers was not the rosy, dimpled child-face whose type is familiar in all our happy homes. She was thin in flesh, and pale; yet the bright, mirthful eyes, and the peculiarly infantile

expression about the mouth, intimated that happiness and love were not altogether strangers to her life.

It was in one of the evening, or "night" schools, as they are more properly called, of New York City, and she was one of the hundred thousand working children in that metropolis, who, after a day of toil, try these uncertain night-paths to knowledge.

Do you care to hear her brief story?

She was ten years of age—none are admitted to the evening schools younger than that. Her sister, not yet old enough to come to school, worked with her at stripping feathers in an establishment on Walker street.

"What kind of feathers are they, and what kind of work is stripping feathers?" we asked.

"Why, like that in your hat," said the bright little creature, looking astonished at my ignorance. "That is what they are like when we have finished them; but we girls work at them before they are dyed. I make about three dollars a week, and my sister—she is only six years old—she does not make as much; sometimes a dollar a week, sometimes more."

Her father was dead, and her sickly mother could earn but a little money by sewing. Such is the pitiful story of thousands in this great Babel of business, pleasure, wealth, poverty, fashion, and suffering.

Soon the invalid mother will pass away, confiding her little ones to the mercy of a heavenly Father. Will he send guardian angels to watch over them, to protect their little steps, and strengthen them for a struggle with the destiny which stares them in the face, and that seems inevitable?

Ah! if these little children were ours! But they are not. We can go away and forget them. Our little ones are safely housed and kept. Man is not his brother's keeper, and we are not bound to look after other people's children.

That peculiar expression of the child's mouth! How it carries me home to a face much smaller and younger, belonging to a little sprite who shall never work ten hours a day at "feathers."

But how do I know what she will do? How many or how few unfortunate turns of the inexorable wheel of human events would be necessary to place her there, side by side with those sad little toilers?

Alas! why must we be so selfish that we can feel nothing but that which touches ourselves, *our* hearts, *our* pleasures, or *our* pockets?

And since so many children are born into the world without competent protectors from its evils, why is innocence left in ignorance and poverty, to stumble and fall under temptation? And when is that ever-present enigma to be solved which Carlyle suggests as the great problem of life: "So many shirts in the world, and so many shirtless backs; how to get the shirtless backs into the shirts?"

So many little unprotected children in the world, and so many rich men and women with warm human hearts: how to get these children into these hearts? How to show people who are anxious to save a suffering and perishing world that the place to begin is the cradle, just as they would begin with a very young plant in order to fashion the tree in symmetry.

Inquiries by the United States Commissioner of Education, seeking the solution of such problems, have elicited facts respecting the number and condition of the poor children in this city, which, it is believed, will be of interest to every thinking man and woman in the country.

How few residents of Manhattan Island realize, or are even aware of the fact, that within its confines are at least one hundred thousand children—the adjacent cities contain perhaps as many more—to whom the morning light on six days of the week brings only toil. For these children there are no schools, no nuttings in the woods, no bright walks in Central Park. They are prematurely burdened with the cares of life; dwarfed in stature from the lack of proper nutriment; by confinement in the bad air of workshops; by the bearing of heavy burdens, and the deprivation of such recreations as a normal childhood imperatively demands. They may be seen in the early morning, in all portions of the city, among the laboring



throng, hastening with serious mien to the service of the day.

When Briareus-handed industry knocks at the gates of the morning, we are apt to think only of strong men and healthy women. But here, side by side with these, are frail little forms, too often but poorly protected against the wintry blast.

Did you, reader, ever reflect that many children begin the terrible struggle of life for food, shelter, and clothing at an age when others are scarcely out of their cradles?

Bestow more than a passing glance upon these little ones now, if you never did before. It is much too early for school, yet each child is carrying what appears to be a lunch, in basket, paper, or bag. Evidently they belong to this class of working children. The lunch will be needed at noon; for ten hours must pass before the tired feet can take their homeward way.

Where are the children going? What do they find to do?

If you care to know, go with me to the night schools, and afterward to the various factories where these night students toil. The teachers keep upon the school registers a faithful record of the employment of each pupil, and among them, probably, almost every occupation which the wants of man sustain is represented, either by adult students or children.

You will be astonished by the vast number of occupations in which boys and girls under the age of fifteen years are made to earn from fifty cents to five dollars per week. Nearly two hundred different employments are recorded in a single school for boys. They manufacture ink, tassels, tin boxes, whalebones, whips, tobacco, toys, soap, shirts, ropes, picture-frames, paper collars and boxes, mineral waters, fans, feathers, corks, chignons, brushes, brier-wood pipes, bonnet-frames, bottles, bags, beads, artificial flowers, and bird-cages. They are apprentice-boys, cash and errand boys; they work at hair-picking and map-coloring; they post bills and 'tend stands. Two have given their occupation as "sexton's assistant." Some of these trades are rather high-sounding for boys, such as blacksmithing, carpentering, and architecture; but it would

seem that nearly every business pursued by adults admits of the employment of children in some of its more simple details.

In the girls' schools, many of these same employments are registered as followed by them. It seems evident that parents of the little workers are not particular what the children do, so that it brings them bread. While boys make ladies' chignons, girls run on errands for the stores. On the register of one night school for girls are recorded the names of fifty as "errands" for a single large dry-goods firm.

Frequently items appear upon the registers indicating a little sentiment of pride or ambition in these night students. The hotel chamber-maid or cook invariably gives her occupation as "housekeeper." One little girl of eleven years professes to be a "saleslady." Eighty little girls at one school are registered as "nurses." They are employed all day at home "taking care of the baby while mother goes out to wash." Some quite small girls, working in type-foundries, give their occupation as "type-setting"; but their work is merely placing the types in rows upon a "setting-stick."

Having visited as many night schools as possible in our limited time, and learned from the younger children where they or any children they may know work, we are ready to begin our tour of the factories and workshops.

The Commissioner of Education in Washington wishes to ascertain, as nearly as possible, how many children under fifteen years of age are pursuing "vocations" instead of being in school. But we soon find that it will not do to say anything about schools or school ages, if we wish to learn facts. A majority of employers were found to be either afraid or ashamed to acknowledge that they employ children. For instance, we know that children of both sexes are employed in cutting corks; but gentlemen in that business, to whom we apply for information, declare that no children work for them.

"How old are your youngest 'hands'?"

"We have none younger than eleven or twelve."

It seems, then, that workers of this age are not considered as children by many employers, and we only arouse their

suspicion and opposition by calling them so. Therefore our inquiries in future will refer only to "young people"—boys and girls. We find a retired cork-cutter who informs us that the number of "young people" employed in the business could not be less than one thousand, which number would be increased fivefold but for the extensive importation of corks ready cut.

Three or four thousand girls work in the various book-binding establishments of the city. A part of the work is simple and suited to little children, such as folding and gathering the material. It is thought that at least half the girls working thus are under fifteen years of age.

Large numbers of children are employed in the manufacture of envelopes, there being about eight thousand, it is said, in the city, fully one-fourth of whom are under fifteen years of age. They gum, separate, and sort the envelopes, being paid three and a half cents per thousand, and earning about three dollars per week. The work seems to be pleasant, clean, and the rooms tolerably well ventilated. In this and some other kinds of work, the chief objection seems to be, that while the children are earning their three dollars per week they cannot be in school, acquiring the education so necessary to arm and prepare them properly for the struggles and competitions of life.

Some children give their occupation as workers in gold-leaf. This work requires the careful exclusion of every breath of air from the room, the leaf is so very light. The one work-room we visited was better ventilated than I expected to find it, and much better than most establishments of the kind, it was stated—some air being admitted by keeping the room door leading to the front office open. Great skill is required in handling the thin, frail leaf, and most of the girls engaged in this work were found to be over thirteen years of age.

Little children are registered as employed in "burnishing" china, silver, and gold ware. The idea that heedless childhood could be trusted to polish our beautiful "sets," our silver

tea-pots, pitchers, cups, and similar articles in gold, seemed so interesting that I took some trouble to see them work, and after going to three places where they had not time, or rather did not care to talk about it, found one gentleman who was willing to take the time. Here were girls, thirteen years of age and upward, sitting in rows before a long table, leaning forward, the handles of the burnishers—curious-looking steel instruments—pressed against the breast, and using them very skillfully in polishing a variety of beautiful and costly articles. When I remarked that this labor and the position of the worker must be very injurious, and liable to permanently injure the lungs, I was informed that the girls complain of little inconvenience after the first week or so, although men who sometimes work at burnishing find it necessary to wear breast-plates for protection.

There are, it is thought, about eight thousand girls employed in the manufacture of paper collars, one-fourth of whom are under fifteen years of age. The youngest children bend the collars, and perform many other simple details of the work. The swiftness and skill attained by some of the older girls, in counting and putting up the collars, is truly astonishing. One whom I saw at work counts and boxes twenty thousand in a day of ten hours. Another, whose business is to paste linings on the button-holes of the collars, three on each, lined five thousand as a day's work.

The making of paper boxes employs at least ten thousand children. An idea may be formed of the immense number of boxes that must be made, from the numbers and varieties to be seen thrown away every day, from the match-box up. In the class of shelf-boxes alone we are shown two hundred different sizes. The larger boxes are made in factories, but the material for the smaller and cheaper varieties is taken home by children and there "worked up." Many become very expert in the use of the material. A teacher of a night school exhibited a present she had received from a pupil, of a miniature pasteboard house and lot, yard, garden, and outhouses complete.



But in all these hundreds of occupations which busy the skilled fingers of little children, the greatest number, and those of the most tender age, are engaged in the preparation of feathers, flowers, and tobacco—mere luxuries, yet considered so indispensable by a majority of men and women.

Reader, if this fact should seem to you of any special significance, and if it should suggest serious thoughts occasionally, do not drive them away, but entertain them kindly. I do not desire to plant thorns in any of your flowers. Far from it. But may it not be hoped that the fine lady, luxuriating in forms of airy beauty, grace, and harmony, will sometimes think pitifully and helpfully of the little children; that the man of ease, contentedly smoking his pipe or cigar, or rolling the sweet morsel under his tongue, may occasionally be carried in imagination to the filthy rooms where young children—almost babes—spend the long day in “stemming” the weed?

Do you think God intended childhood as a season for drudgery? If not, can any of you suggest some good plan by which the “rights” of children may be secured to them? Women who are already awake to some of the great issues of the hour, will you now arouse more fully to the importance of educating the children? Is not the question a fundamental one? And the rights of all children once secured, will not the world then be right?

With the addresses of a dozen or more feather and artificial flower establishments in various portions of the city, nearly three days were passed in the vain attempt to witness and sketch the simple operations of stripping or cutting feathers. The manufacturers in this business are remarkably fearful of the light, and have adopted stringent rules—unalterable as the laws of the Medes and Persians—excluding all visitors from their work-rooms; but some of them refuse us politely, and invent the best excuses they can.

One proprietor has no young girls at work, just now, either in the feathers or flowers; another is making repairs; one, whose refusal is expressed beforehand in his forbidding face,

informs us that he has "no time to be bothered; the young people are well enough off; never you mind them."

The gentleman in charge of the establishment on Walker street, where our little friend of the night school works, was polite and willing to give information, but as determined as others not to admit visitors. Another gentleman assured us frankly that no manufacturer of feathers and flowers in the city would allow visitors in his work-room, and the reason given is that each has particular patterns of his own, and fears that they may be copied by others. Some, it is stated, even send their "hands" to seek work in other establishments, and, after a few days, take them back to enjoy the benefit of what they may have learned.

When quite discouraged, we found a very small workshop, one of hundreds carried on in the city, employing about a dozen girls. The proprietor, a Frenchman, who is just commencing business, was not only willing to let us sketch the little girls at work, but desired a picture made of the larger girls curling the colored feathers and preparing the flowers. All seemed pleased with the idea of being "put into a book."

Manufacturers of feathers and flowers have said that there were engaged in this work as many as ten thousand girls in New York and Brooklyn, two-thirds of whom are under fifteen years of age, and some as young as six and seven. The work done by the youngest children is simple, and manufacturers insist that it is very easy, consisting merely of stripping or cutting the feathers and stringing them, preparatory to dyeing, or preparing the material for flowers by equally simple operations. It is thought much more pleasant than any other work in which large numbers of children are engaged. The work-rooms are not foul with unhealthful odors, but are generally tolerably well ventilated. Yet the children do not thrive upon this "easy" work. Few of them look as children should—fat, rosy, and cheerful.

Many thousands of children, some of them very small, are at work in the tobacco factories of New York City. More than one thousand are employed by a single firm, and there are

hundreds of smaller establishments scattered through the city, sometimes consisting of merely the members of a single family. Permits to visit the larger factories are not easily obtained. In this craft, also, proprietors have methods of work which they jealously guard.

"I have expostulated," said the manager of one of the oldest tobacco establishments, as he gave us a permit to visit the factories under his charge, "against the employment of young children; but the overseers say that the children will go elsewhere and get work; that their parents are in want and need their labor, and so it seems impossible to avoid hiring them."

In one of their factories the youngest child employed is four years of age, the oldest person a woman of eighty. They work side by side.

Children so young as four years, we are told, are not regularly hired, but, in cases where their parents or guardians are employed, are brought with them for safe keeping, and as it is quite impossible for them to "keep still" all the time, they are glad to imitate the others in "stemming," and are soon able to add a dollar to the weekly wages of mother, sister, or grandmother. Thus they learn the business, and in the course of a year or two become regular "hands."

I saw a very pretty little baby, certainly not more than four years of age, trying to learn. She looked very demure sitting upon an inverted basket, and occasionally glancing sidewise at visitors. Every worker in this room, we are told, is Irish; but this nursling, with her prominent forehead, delicate features, blue eyes, and golden hair, looks more like a stray fairy who has lost her way and fallen into the foulest and darkest of prisons.

The entire building steams with the fumes of tobacco, and some of the rooms are positively unbearable to those not accustomed to the odor. The rooms where the women and children work are the least objectionable; but they are dreadful places for young children to grow up in.

The youngest girls are separated from each other in their work by a goodly number of steady old women being placed

between them—"otherwise, you know," said our cicerone, "the children would play." They sit upon benches, ranged along in regular rows, quite near together. At the end of every bench hang upon the wall numbers of hoop-skirts, ready for duty upon the street when it is time to go home, but unnecessary and inconvenient about the work.

Ten thousand children, it is said, are working in tobacco, in New York and Brooklyn, for ten hours a day, six days of the week, and fully five thousand of them are believed to be under fifteen years of age. Children in many cases supply the places of more mature hands, and thus offer the employer an opportunity for gain not to be resisted as long as other manufacturers with whom he must compete employ this cheap labor.

Were stringent laws passed, similar to those existing in some of the New England States, regulating the employment of children under a certain age, many of the employers would accept the change, and would coöperate with others in arranging for a voluntary system of half-time schools; while not a few declare that such a system "would n't work"—they "could n't be bothered with it."

Tell them of the good results at Indian Orchard, and other places, from half-time schools, they say: "Oh, in New England things can be done that can't be done anywhere else. Besides, in New England they work more hours than we do here. Our children can have an extra two hours for evening school."

I thought of the weary forms and heavy eyelids I had seen in all the evening schools with a feeling of despair. Could anything be more pitiful than the attempts of children, under such conditions of mind and body, to learn the difference between *b* and *c*, or to master the absurdities of our spelling?

In a subterranean apartment a few dozen boys are at work chopping the weed in its rough form, preparing it for the process of softening in brine for the "stemmers." A little light comes in from somewhere, enough for us to distinguish the utter dreariness of the scene. The little stove in the middle of the cellar fails to overcome the dampness of the atmosphere,



but the exercise seems to keep the boys warm. Most of them, as might be expected, are chewing tobacco.

Many other details of the work in tobacco, which must be passed over for want of space, are performed by boys and girls. An undersized girl of twelve we saw elevated upon a box feeding a large machine. Her labor, it is stated, is equal in quantity and quality to that of an adult.

Interesting boys of ten or eleven were keeping the knives of a cutting machine clear by using a sponge saturated with rum, thus being brought in contact at once with two brother vices of society—rum and tobacco. They are getting their education. If they prove apt scholars we may expect them to graduate in a few years.

In addition to the outrage of sacrificing the health and educational interests of children by keeping them at mechanical drudgery nearly all their waking hours, certain kinds of labor they perform are absolutely dangerous to life and limb. At the evening schools we heard of girls who, while working in twine manufactories, had lost one and two joints of their fingers. The principal of one school stated that last winter she had ten girls who had lost the initial finger from the right hand, and therefore could not be taught to write. One child, who learned to write with the left hand, came to school afterward with the initial finger of that hand also gone. It was taken off in the twisting machinery at a twine factory.

Determined to see this terrible machine, we learned the address of the largest twine establishment in the city, and away up-town, nearly to Central Park, we went one bitter cold day—so cold that, to keep our courage up, it needed the reflection that little girls, thinly clad, struggle through such weather all winter long, plunge into it from hot work-rooms and with vitality consumed by labor in impure air.

We found about three hundred persons at work, two hundred of them being children under fifteen years of age, and nearly all girls, who spin, wind, and twist the flax.

We were shown a very picturesque machine for hackling the flax, tended by ten sturdy little boys of twelve or thirteen

years of age, five on each end. They were mounted upon a platform to enable them to reach and change the clamps which held the flax. This monster machine, which supersedes the small hacklers upon which our grandmothers dressed their flax, requires to be fed at either end continuously, and it works with the regularity and remorselessness of fate. Not discovering this peculiarity at first, and observing the boys working for dear life, we remarked to the proprietor: "These boys seem to be trying to show off before you."

"No," he replied, "the machine keeps them at it."

"Is it not better for them than running in the streets?" asked the proprietor.

"Better than that, yes; but how are they to be educated?"

"They nearly all go to evening schools."

Studying in the evening after working like this all day! No wonder they fall asleep over their lessons.

This tread-mill of a machine made me forget for a moment the terrible twistors we came to see. Only for a moment. Descending to the next floor we find a few women at work, and a few boys, but nearly all girls, of various ages, and engaged in many different labors, but all of one complexion—sooty, grimy, dusty, flaxy: all were dressed in a coarse skirt of hemp, often ragged and tattered. They ran from one corner of the room to another, carrying heavy boxes and armfuls of bobbins. You might almost imagine they were having a grand play, with such celerity do they fly from place to place; but the little faces are very sober, some thin and pale, and all appear to have arrived at a "realizing sense" of the burthens of life. There is one wielding a broom almost twice as high as herself, and almost as large around as her legs—the thinness of the latter showing painfully under her short, tattered dress. If she could go to the Children's Aid Society's schools for even a part of the day, they would dress her warmly, and give her at least one nourishing meal in the twenty-four hours.

Here are the dreadful twisting machines, very disappointing in appearance, seeming to be only long rows of spindles

stretching from one end of the room to the other, with nothing peculiarly dangerous about them. The proprietor is anxious to confirm the impression caused by their harmless appearance.

"A few girls," he says, "have had their fingers *hurt* in these machines; but it was always in cases where they forgot or neglected their work to talk or play. The twisters are not more dangerous than other machines at which children work."

I asked a little girl who had lost the fourth finger of her right hand how it happened, and she replied:

"It was the rule that we go to help the others, and I went to help a girl, and she kept twisting the twine so," giving her hands a great flourish. "But my little finger always *did* stick out from the others, and it got caught among the flax, and I knew it would take my hand off, and I jerked it out with all my might, and only lost half the finger. If I had been slow, my hand would have been taken off."

This is the simple story of a girl of twelve years. She was trying to imitate one more skillful than herself. The stories of other fingers lost in twine factories would differ but slightly from this. A moment's forgetfulness of the danger, but one moment of yielding to the universal childish impulse to play, and the mischief is done.

It is expected that penalties must follow violations of the law of mechanics, as of other laws, but children should not be placed in situations where so sad a penalty is the result of a moment's inattention. Their innocence and ignorance appeal for protection against the possibility of such calamities. An engine of 150 horse-power, driving a balance-wheel of 18,000 pounds weight, is an irresistible force when it clashes with the little finger of a child. Should not children's fingers be protected from the destruction threatened by such machinery, in some manner—by law if not otherwise?

But if the situation of children engaged in regular employment is so sad, what can be said of those who are drifting about the streets of the city, without any real homes or steady employment, but supporting a miserable existence by such irregular work as they can obtain—living "by their wits"?

From fifteen to twenty thousand is considered a moderate estimate of the number of boys and girls situated thus in the midst of this great center of wealth and refinement. Many of these are orphans—others worse than orphans—children of criminals and poor wretches sunk deep in the degradation of drunkenness. Some are runaways from other cities ; some are children of emigrants whose parents die upon the way here ; some have fathers in the army and no mothers ; others have invalid mothers and no fathers. Their daily portion is hunger, cold, and misery of almost every description. They may be seen almost every day upon the street, bent double, staggering under heavy loads, sweeping the crossings, or begging. Sometimes they go without food until sick with hunger. Often their loathing of the miserable holes they call home is so great that they seek lodging in the station-house, and not unfrequently the beginning is made in crime for the sake of the shelter of even a prison over their heads.

The work of the New York Juvenile Asylum has been often described. The Children's Aid Society is likewise doing a beneficent work for a portion of these outcasts by providing shelter, employment, food, and schools in the city, and permanent homes in the West. Six thousand sent to permanent homes, and twelve thousand aided to employment in some direction, during the period of seventeen years, is a great work in itself, but compared to that which needs to be done it is but a mite. The means of the Society are limited, and in other respects its operations are hampered by obstacles which a mere private enterprise must necessarily encounter.

Why should not the State aid, if not sustain such efforts entirely, by liberal appropriations, or by the enactment of wise helping laws ?

The magnitude of this evil is not appreciated. When it was proposed by Mr. Brace, the leading spirit in the Children's Aid Society work, to start the Rivington-street lodging-house for boys, many persons, even those who were engaged in the work, doubted the necessity of the step. The president of the Society thought there were not homeless boys enough to need



it; but very soon it was full, and now applicants for lodging have to be sent away every day.

I asked some bright little newsboys, lodgers at this house, how many such hotels they thought there ought to be for boys in New York. One thought that thirty would do, and another said it would need fifty. I asked another if he thought there were many boys now out of employment in New York. He said:

"The city's full of them. Why, there's men even offering to work for boys' wages."

When this unequal struggle of childhood with hunger, cold, and all the nameless horrors of poverty has produced its natural effect, and the boy or girl has become hardened, the people, in self-protection, are obliged to support them in reformatories or prisons, while any plan by which all the poor children might be supported and schooled, and thus made useful citizens, would seem to the same people like useless extravagance. It is stated that it now costs the State of New York more than four times as much to support her criminal courts as to educate her children. Is this true? And if it is true, what of it?

Horace Mann, the great apostle of the people, as President Sarmiento so justly designates him, saw the truths which underlie this question more clearly and stated them more forcibly than any other person has ever done. Twenty-five years ago he told the people of this republic that—"No greater calamity can befall us as a nation than that our children should grow up without knowledge and cultivation. If we do not prepare them to become good citizens, develop their capacities, enrich their minds with knowledge, imbue their hearts with a love of truth and duty, and a reverence for all things holy, then our republic must go down to destruction as others have gone before it, and mankind must sweep through another vast cycle of sin and suffering before the dawn of a better era can arise upon the world."

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*"FESTINA LENTE."*

ONE of those fresh and sincere voices, which seem to me to be very truly characteristic of the New World, comes across the three thousand miles of sea rolling and leaping under these wild south winds. It reminds me of certain good intentions of mine, of pledges half given years ago, and never even half redeemed. It asks, not indeed for payment in full, but for some small installment, some acknowledgment of the debt, which will serve to prevent the statute of limitations from running. It tells me of a crowd of eager and bright young listeners, who think I may have some word to say to them which they want to hear—an eager, bright young crowd of American boys, from nine to eighteen years of age—and asks "if I can have the heart to refuse" to say it.

Not I, indeed! For I never had the heart to refuse anything to such applicants. But how to redeem my pledge—what word to say to such an audience—how to reach the hearts of "the youth that own the coming years" in a land which is not my own, though I can scarcely look on it as a foreign land—there lies the puzzle.

The sight of an ordinary crowd, we are told, is—in England, at least—always a sad one, if you take note of the expression of the faces in repose; though it may be inspiring enough when any strong wave of feeling is passing through or over them. I should say, from my own experience, that "pathetic" rather than "melancholy" is the true word, even for a grown-up crowd, and it most certainly is with a crowd of boys. Who can help being roused and lifted out of the humdrum jog-trot of the daily life of middle age when he gets in touch with them—lifted, though it may be only for a short hour or so, by the inspiring contact of overflowing health, and joy, and hope, into the breezy, buoyant atmosphere of early morning?

"When all the world is young, lads,  
And all the trees are green,  
With every goose a swan, lads,  
And every lass a queen,—

Then heigh for boot and horse, lads,  
And round the world away!  
Young blood must have its course, lads,  
And every dog his day.”

Yes, pathetic is the true word. For even while looking on the young faces, and feeling the pulse and inspiration of the dawn of life down to one's finger ends, thoughts of another kind will crowd up into the mind,—“thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,”—of beginnings cut short, of projects abandoned, of designs marred, of expectations unfulfilled.

But fair and softly! How soon one's pen runs away with one! These are not the words I meant to say, or the thoughts I meant to suggest to you, young readers. You will touch the pathetic side of life, all of you, soon enough. Why should I thrust it on you before the appointed hour?

Meantime I say, revel in the dawn. Rejoice in your young strength and life; aim high, and build your castles like brave young architects, only taking care to dig the foundations deep, and to lay them with care and patience. Whether you will ever be able to build on them such brave and lofty towers and halls as you dream of now, matters comparatively little to you or your country. A thousand accidents and chances will determine in the coming years what the superstructure shall be,—accidents and chances we call them for want of a better name,—which you cannot control in the outset, but which will be controlled and settled for you.

What materials you will have to work with, who can say? To one clay, to another wood, to another marble, to another jewels and precious stones, will be served out in the great workshop of the world. You cannot make your choice; it will be made for you. But this you can and may do, and should be doing now: You can so prepare the ground and the foundations that whatever material shall come to your hand hereafter shall surely be made the most of, and used in the best way; so that whether you have to build marble palaces, or brick houses or log huts, the work shall be faithful and strong, and fit to stand the stress of the wildest weather, and the wear and tear of time.

What are these foundations but the principles and habits which underlie the character of the man, and which can only be laid to good purpose by the boy? Truthfulness, self-control, simplicity, obedience,—these are the great corner-stones, to be welded and bound together by the cement of patience. “If I had only one word to speak to my boys,” said one of the wisest and best educators of our time, “it should be Patience, Patience, Patience, over and over again.” The world is getting into such a feverish hurry, and we are going so fast, that we are all in danger of missing the best things in life—the common sights and sounds which lie by the way-side on every stage of the journey, and nowhere in greater profusion than on the first stage. This is our trouble, and likely to be more and more the trouble of our children.

But, happily for us, our boys are the least affected by the disease of any section of society. The upper-school boy, unless he is a mere shiftless ne’er-do-well (a very small section of any community), is, as a rule, more than content with his daily life; he is rejoicing and glorying in it. And his daily life repays him with interest. He stands there, at seventeen or eighteen, on the verge of manhood,—a boy still in heart, full of enthusiasms and aspirations, but with an intellect and body patiently and carefully trained, looking hopefully to the next step in life, but unwilling to hurry it,—the best poised and most equally developed human creature, take him all round, that our life can show. He has not sold his birthright, and the grand morning hours of life, when boyhood is maturing, have passed slowly over him, leaving behind them a bouquet and fragrance which will sweeten the coming years, and a reserve of strength for the labor and heat of the approaching midday.

“Ah, your boy keeps his birthright, and ours sells it for a very poor mess of pottage,” writes one American friend to me; while another says: “You, in England, have a proverb, ‘Boys will be boys’; ours should run just the other way, ‘Boys wont be boys.’ I wish to heaven they would, and no one would grudge paying for broken glass and crockery.”



“Have you had any American boys under you?” I asked of one of the ablest English masters, who has had a great experience at two of our best public schools.

“Yes,” he said, “I have had several as pupils, and have known a good many more; and nice, clever fellows they were. Very like our own boys, too, but older of their age, as a rule.”

“Ah, you found it so!” I said. “I suppose they did n’t care so much for games. Is that what you mean?”

“Well, partly so; but not exactly. They seemed rather to endure than to enjoy their lives, not only in the playing-fields, but in the schools. There were several promising cricketers, for instance, amongst them; but they did n’t work at it as most of our boys do, or get the same zest out of it. And it was much the same with their school-work. They did it because they were sent there to do it, and did n’t care to be left behind. But they could n’t throw themselves into the life with any enthusiasm, and so lost much of the pleasure, as well as the profit, of it.”

“But might n’t that come from early associations and training? Our boys have a world of their own which is sufficient for them. To be captain of the school, or of the eleven, or of bigside foot-ball, or of the boats, is to be famous in that little world which they have heard their big brothers talk of ever since they were breeched. But an American boy has not been reared in the traditions, and so can’t care so much for our boy’s world. He feels like an outsider at an English school.”

“Possibly. At any rate, it ’s a great loss, and would hinder me from sending over a boy of mine if I were an American.”

“What! Not even to learn to write Greek and Latin verses? I fancy that art is ignored on the other side, and you know you think in your secret soul that life must be a poor thing to a man who can’t amuse himself in a leisure half-hour by turning the last popular song into iambics, or longs and shorts.”

“Well, so be it. Great, I own, are iambics, and great are longs and shorts; but you may pay too much for them, and

the Yankee boy, I 'm afraid, buys our culture too dear. It does n't satisfy him. It is n't what he wants. Over here he is n't willing to remain a boy; very likely, as you say, because he feels like an outsider in our boy's world. Probably at home he would find something answering to it, in which he could let himself out, and be satisfied, without wanting to discount life, and be a man before his time."

How is it, my boys? Are my correspondents and friends right? Are you hurrying up your own lives, and therefore, so far as you can, spoiling the life of your country? Well, if so, the only word I have to say to you (like my friend above referred to) is—patience, patience, patience! But I am a stranger, and know little of your needs or your hopes. Let me cite, then, one who has the best right to speak to you, and whose words ought to go straight to the heart of every American boy. Take down your Lowell, and look out a little poem (not one of his best in workmanship, but a gem in spirit and motive) called "Hebe." The gods' messenger descends to earth, bearing in her hands their choicest gift, the cup brimming with nectar—inspiration, and solace, and strength—for the lip of him whom the gods approve. The youth rushes to meet her—will snatch the cup from her hand. In his haste it is broken, and the precious contents spilled on the ground.

"O spendthrift haste! await the gods:  
Their nectar crowns the lips of Patience;  
Haste scatters on unthankful sods  
The immortal gift in vain libations.  
Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,  
And shuns the hand would seize upon her;  
Follow thy life, and she shall sue  
To pour for thee the cup of honor."

Yes, follow your lives, and you will control them; get ahead of them, and they will slip from under your hand. You are bred with a strong faith in your country and her destiny; justify that faith, then, and remember that "he that believeth shall not make haste."

*HOW TO SAVE TIME.*

WHEN people say that they are doing this or that "to pass away the time," they forget that "time is the stuff life is made of."

Wasting time is the same thing as wasting life, and those who know how to economize time have learned the only possible way of lengthening their lives.

Almost every one has observed that some persons are able to accomplish a great deal, while others, who have as favorable opportunities, equal talent, and as good health as they, do very little. Now, one person has really no more time than another, only he chooses to use it differently.

When you read the lives of famous persons, you will always find that they have been great workers. The celebrated Madame Roland was not only a politician and a scholar, but a house-keeper. In her "Appeal to Posterity," she says: "Those who know how to employ themselves always find leisure moments, while those who do nothing are in want of time for everything."

Mrs. Somerville, the famous astronomer, knew how to crowd a great deal into life. Young people are apt to suppose that one who was as learned as she was must have spent all her life in hard study, and have had a very stupid time. But Mrs. Somerville learned to use her moments so carefully that she had time for many things besides her mathematics. She went into very brilliant society, read and wrote much, and—let me whisper to the girls—found time to make her own dresses and attend to many domestic duties, which some people would consider unworthy the attention of a great and learned mind. What helped her most, in all these varied employments, was that she had the power of so concentrating her attention upon what she was doing, that nothing going on around her could distract her thoughts.

It is true that all cannot do this, if they try ever so hard; but many who have not formed the habit of concentrating attention cannot read to themselves or write an ordinary letter where others are talking.

Another good way of saving time is to learn to move quickly, not forgetting, however, that there is a kind of "haste" which "makes waste." Try to acquire a dexterity in doing those common things which must be done very frequently. For instance, the operation of dressing has to be gone through by all many times in the course of the year, yet some people are always dressed at the appointed time, while others, who have been busy as long as they, are sure to be behindhand, because they have a habit of dawdling.

Whatever you have to do, learn first to do it in the best way, and then to be as little while about it as is consistent with doing it properly.

Those who take care of the moments find that the hours take care of themselves.

Some people keep up a large correspondence by writing letters in their odd moments, while others are always burdened with unanswered letters, and when they do write, are sure to take time which makes it necessary for them to neglect some more important duty.

Another good rule is not to try to do too many things at a time. There is a very pretty story by Jane Taylor, called "Busy Idleness," which illustrates this. It is an account of two sisters, one of whom worked hard for two weeks to accomplish nothing but a collection of beginnings, all of very useful things, but not one complete; while the other, without half the trouble, had really done a good deal by not attempting more than she was able to finish.

We waste more time in waiting for ourselves than we do in waiting for others, and after we have done one thing, we are often so long in deciding what to take up next, that when we have decided, the time is gone which we ought to have given to it. But those who are always ready to pass quickly from one occupation to another will have accomplished all they had intended while we have been thinking what to be at. If you have some definite idea in the morning of what you mean to do during the day, whether in work or play, you will do more than you will if you simply pass from one thing to another



with no plan; and you will be more likely to do things at the proper time.

Another help to save time is the habit of keeping things where they belong, so that you will not waste precious moments in looking for them. Have at least two books always in reading—one which does not require very close attention, for leisure moments, when you do not feel like doing much, and one solid one, which requires more continuous thought. I suppose this was the plan of the old lady who always sent to the library for “a sermon book, and another book.”

It is surprising how much can be acquired by giving a little time each day to systematic reading. The story is often told of the young man who read through Macaulay's History of England, and was surprised at ending so soon, by a habit of reading a few pages each day, while he was waiting for his dinner. Of course, the same rule applies to other things, as well as to reading.

Do not imagine, after all this, that simply because you are always doing something you are industrious. You may be worse than idle, if you are wasting not only time, but eyesight and materials. Work must be to some purpose, to be worthy of the name. It may be better to be idle all day, than to be reading trash, or straining your eyes and nerves over some intricate and useless piece of needle-work, “red with the blood of murdered time.” Many of these things are made only “to give away,” because people are too indolent to think of any gift more useful or appropriate. A simple, inexpensive present, which shows that you have thought of what your friend would like best, is better than a very costly and elaborate one, which is only made from a wish to get rid of an obligation, and which misuses time in the making.

Whatever you do, do it with all your might, whether it be croquet, or arithmetic, or base-ball, or worsted work. If a boy is thinking of his Latin lesson when he ought to be striking a ball, he will probably be thinking of the game when he ought to be saying “*Sum, es, est,*” and the result will be that he will have neither a good lesson nor a good score.

Now, perhaps, you will say that all this advice is of no use to you, because you have all the time you want now; but you must not forget that there are a great many people in the world who find it hard work to crowd into a day all that it is necessary for them to do, and they would be very glad to have you give some of your leisure to them. Unemployed time is a sure indication of neglected duty. Even the ant, in the old nursery rhyme, says:

“I always find something or other to do,  
If not for myself, for my neighbor.”

When you have not enough to occupy you, look among your circle of acquaintances, and see who of them needs to have you “lend a hand.”

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## PART VIII. THE HOME.

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### *OUTDOOR PARLORS.*

WHEN I see a house in process of building without a liberal allowance of piazzas, I resent it almost as a personal injury, although there may be no reasonable probability that I shall ever sit under that man's vine or fig-tree. The vine, especially, would be altogether figurative without the material support of a veranda. As good a rule would be, in building first make your piazza, then attach a house to it.

The in-door parlor is sure to be provided for with the usual amount of sofas and draperies; but the outdoor is too often like a rent—the accident of a day. “Shall we run out a railing here and a few steps, and have a veranda?” asks Paterfamilias, in a dubious sort of a way, and his wife usually assents, for she does not dislike the idea; although she would sooner part with this appendage than give up the valuable inclosure at the back of the kitchen, which is so particularly handy as a sort of store-house and a place for the doing of odd jobs.

The enthusiasm comes from the girls, who know the value of a front piazza with a thick green curtain of honeysuckle

and wistaria, making a shady retreat through the long June days and the torrid August noons,—fragrant, like carefully kept linen, with delicious country smells,—clover and fresh hay, in place of lavender and rose-leaves,—strong distilled sweetness of woodbine, faint whiffs of clematis, and roses.

And when the moonlight comes and traces a lattice-work of leaves on the piazza floor, and touches with lambent light each spray and corner,

“Making earth’s commonest things appear  
All romantic, poetic, and tender,”

the outdoor parlor is in its glory. It is the most delightful, dreamy lounging-place, where the odor of fragrant Havanas is apt to mingle with the honeysuckle, and the steps are frequently occupied by half-visitors who could scarcely nerve themselves up to the formula of a regular call. How charming is its twilight darkness to a class of people who do most of their conversation in whispers, and who are seldom characterized as great talkers,—who look upon the brightness of the in-door parlor and its animated groups without any feelings of envy, assured that whatever good times there are in the world they are having them! What would lovers do if there were no piazzas?

Some piazzas are simply an exasperation: so narrow that the steps rudely crowd the front door, instead of keeping their distance, as they should do, and only crossing the front of the house. This is a great mistake; there should be at least *two* sides to a veranda, to allow of one corner, and three if possible; while it should certainly measure four yards in width. We are speaking now of the piazza for a moderate house—moderate in every way. Hudson River castles, and similar mansions elsewhere, have their full complement of generous verandas; it is the middle-class houses that suffer.

We recall one of these mansions, with its magnificent piazza, on which many happy hours have been spent—the delicate trellis-work forming Moorish arches, each of which framed an exquisite picture in living green. When flooded



with moonlight, the place took on a tone of superhuman beauty. There were many accessories, too, on that piazza—things out of the common way, and selected with an artistic idea of coloring. Hanging-baskets were suspended from every point of the arches, and their tangled vines were masses of verdure and blossoms; while rustic stands filled with plants stood, not in the way of promenaders, but well back against the house. Scarlet cushions on backs and seats made the bamboo chairs luxurious, and a pile of Moorish cushions in one corner arrested the eye and fascinated the sense. They must have been stuffed with poppies to account for their sleep-charming powers; while the arabesque embroidery on a scarlet ground which adorned them, and the rug spread out below, were a most successful imitation of Moorish splendor.

This curious couch, on which one half sat and half reclined, was quite in demand among the inmates and visitors on those intolerable nights, which are not at all like angels' visits, between the 20th of June and the 20th of August; and the hostess would amiably wish that she had six Moorish beds instead of one. But a single duplicate of the novelty would have spoiled the effect, so far as appearances went.

As a general thing, the furniture of our outdoor parlors does not receive sufficient consideration; it is either not picturesque or it is uncomfortable. A 'rustic chair, uncushioned, is, to a certain extent, picturesque on a piazza, but it is not comfortable; while a bamboo settee is neither one nor the other. Camp-chairs with gay-colored seats are very desirable, if the color and design are good; and two or three cushions in a corner will make a very good substitute for the Moorish pile. A bright-colored afghan thrown over the pile, or on the end of the settee, adds much to the effect. In fact, anything that makes a good contrast with green is desirable on the piazza. Prettiest of all is it to see a child asleep on a gay-colored rug, watched by a Newfoundland dog.

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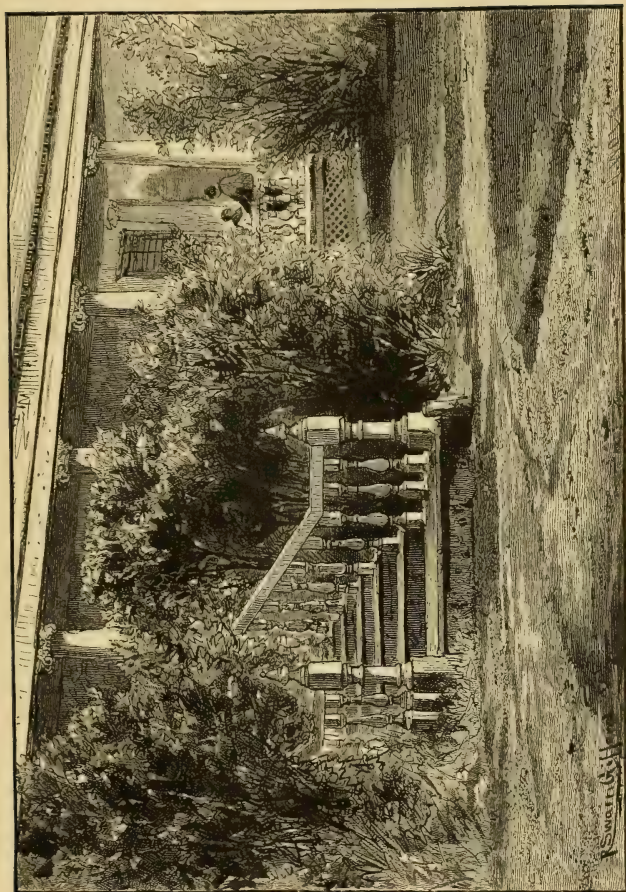
*THE PIAZZA.*

IN this country, with its perpetual contradiction of icy winters and brief, torrid summers, one can hardly live in the country without a piazza. In hot weather it supplies a shaded outdoor resting-place for the family ; after storms of wind and drifted snow, which render the roads impassable to delicate walkers, it furnishes a sheltered and easily swept promenade. It is, or should be, wide enough to accommodate a tea-party on occasion. It should be sheltered from the wind, and from the sun, so far as to provide a shady corner for all hours of the day. If possible, it should look out on something pleasant. Country views, with wide spaces and soft horizons, are not always possible ; but almost every country dweller can secure a tree, a few flowers, a reach of sky, perhaps even a glimpse of the sunset, while the less fortunate may at least drape morning-glories, sweet-brier, or flowering vines over the supports and walls. But whether the piazza look out upon Arcadia or the chicken-coop, its best charm and adornment must be the vines with which its pillars are clothed. Vines thus planted play an important part. They adorn the house by which they grow, frame it in, and with leafy arches make it more beautiful for those without and those within.

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*THE SACRIFICIAL PARLOR.*

WE call it thus, wittingly, because it is the high altar upon which we offer to the gods of custom and tradition all that is best and choicest of our earthly possessions—including comfort and convenience. We generally choose for it the largest, highest, airiest, sunniest room our abode contains. We buy for it the best carpet we can afford, the handsomest furniture, the nicest draperies. We hang in it our few really



THE PIAZZA.





good pictures; lock up in a glass-fronted case our most elegantly bound books; arrange our pet bits of bric-à-brac in a carefully careless manner; leave a stiff bouquet, now and again, in a vase on the center-table. And then, do we go there and enjoy it, after the day's occupations are complete, and the scattered family can meet on common ground?

Not a bit of it. We pull down the shades, or drop the heavy curtains till there is just light enough to stumble over the furniture in, and then depart, leaving the door ajar with what we try to believe is an attractively easy air. Now, of what possible use is the apartment to us? We have done the best we can to make it pretty and pleasant. We have used our taste and judgment, and very probably more money than we ought to have spared from the rest of the house, to render this room the most beauteous under the roof. Yet, when it is at last finished to our mind, we avoid it, like a pitfall. — It is n't because we have done the thing entirely for show. We invade its sacred precincts to receive calls (then we pull up one shade after the caller comes and lower it the moment he or she is gone); we entertain formal visitors there,—not to mention evening companies. But whatever the occasion, we and it partake of the stiffness of unfamiliarity. Our foot is not on our native heath, though we may have been for years owner of the brilliant (carpet) flowers we tread upon. We are not at home in our own house, and we are heartily glad to escape from the walls of our own parlor.

We go there on Sundays and holidays, sitting in unwelcome state on springs that have never grown easy with use; but we are always privately cheered when bed-time relieves us of the necessity of patronizing our own best furniture. We occupy our parlor from a sense of duty to society, and not because we really like or enjoy it. And when we do go there, we are rarely all together. "The boys" won't visit it, if they can help it. They always stick to the pleasantest, cheerfulest, coziest place in the house. The place where the family *live* is the place for them. It may be the library, the dining-room, or "mother's room"; but, wherever it is, there will "the boys"

stay ; and it may generally be believed that where "the boys"—unless they are boors—wont go, must be a very uncomfortable place. "The girls," being more conventional by birth and training, accept the parlor and its depressing atmosphere as matters of social necessity ; besides, if there be any compensation in it, it is much more vital to them than to "the boys."

Of course, there must be something wrong about all this, and the causes would seem to be these : Custom and tradition have imposed upon us the notion, first, that the best of all we have should be reserved for "company"—to be enjoyed by ourselves only incidentally through them ; second, that we should have at least one apartment in our houses too good for daily occupancy.

From the days when the "best room"—that apotheosis of all refined discomfort—used to be hermetically sealed to common wants, to the present, when we are less rigid in arrangement but none the less scrupulous in treatment, the parlor, in the majority of American homes, has ever been the corner where nobody has wanted to stay. It contains the choicest that our house affords—except the living home presence which pervades every other square inch, but refuses to enter here. We have literally made it too good for ourselves ; therefore, too good for our friends ; for what is too good for ourselves ought, of necessity, to be too good for our associates. We feel that we cannot afford to subject our fine furniture to every-day wear and tear. We know that it would be difficult to replace the rich carpet for years. We express contempt for Mrs. Jones, who frankly declares she cannot afford to let the light fade her Axminster or Moquette ; and laugh at Mrs. Brown, who keeps her chairs and lounges dressed in linen dusters, as if they were always about to start on some penitential pilgrimage. But we are, nevertheless, very careful that our parlor hangings are shielded from that most guiltless of enemies, the sun. We take no satisfaction in our parlor because we have adapted it only to our occasional, not to our constant, demands.

The parlor should be the rallying point in daily family life. It should be the room from which we separate to our regular occupations in the morning, and in which we gather again in the evening with our favorite books, our bits of fancy work, our fireside games. It should be furnished in the finest, the most elegant way that is within—truly within—our means, because here, and here alone, probably, can we enjoy with those nearest and dearest the æsthetic part of domestic routine. It may be given over, in a measure, to ornament, because it is not, like the nursery, a romping ground for the children; or, like the kitchen, the sewing-room, the school-room, or the office, the place for toil. But above and beyond all, it should be the room in which centers the soul and throbs the heart of home life.

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*RED.*

PUT a touch of red here and there in the favorite family room, whether it be library, sitting-room, or parlor. The delicate blues and pinks, mixed with white muslin, are very pretty and suitable for chambers, where we want the rooms to look pure and cool and lovely; but if we want our intimate friends who are admitted into our family rooms to exclaim, on opening the door, "What a bright, cheerful room, and how cozy and comfortable you look!" then add the touch of red. Two or three shades of light gray; a wall-paper with graceful sprays supporting little red-breasted birds, or composed of autumn leaves, lights up well. Add a few red-bound books to those on the shelves, red or red-and-white lambrequins, a red table-cover, or gray with red applique, a red-and-gray cover to the lounge, and a bright carpet. Put autumn leaves among the grasses in the pretty vases on the mantel. Then, with pictures on the walls, no matter of what kind so that they are good, and a few flowers in the windows, the furniture can be

of the plainest; but such a room will be the delight of the family, and the coloring, not being sufficient to be glaring and offend the eye, will add twofold to the cheerfulness of the bright fire—with the brass andirons, of course.

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### *ABOUT FLOORS AND RUGS.*

MODERN fashion is responsible for so many absurdities that it is only fair to expect from it some really sensible innovations. To offset the ridiculous eruptions of meaningless and ugly bric-à-brac, the collections of china dogs and climbing monkeys, the fire-places with their mock logs and senseless gas flames, we have at least one sensible, wholesome fashion. In place of the old-fashioned carpet, serving as a reservoir of dust in the rooms of a careless housekeeper, and as a continual thorn in the flesh to the careful one, we may now have polished floors and movable rugs, and yet be in the fashion.

The outcry which the devotees of hygiene make against carpets, as affording such admirable hiding-places for dust and the germs of disease, cannot be urged with equal force against rugs. In the first place, the corners of the room are always open to sun and air, to water and soap, and these, all housekeepers know, are the places where dust accumulates; in the second, with very little trouble a rug may be taken up, beaten, and sunned; and whenever the floor is washed, dusted, or waxed, it should be lifted along the edges, and the dust carefully removed. Where rugs are filled in about the edges with carpeting, they must meet the hygienists in the same rank with carpets, as they have no advantage over them in that case.

I have nothing to say to the people who can afford to have inlaid or even simple natural wood floors; but there is many a careful housewife who is living in a rented house, or who cannot afford either to have her floors relaid or covered with wood



carpeting, and yet who would be glad to replace her worn-out carpets with rugs. The floors in well-finished Northern houses, having all the modern improvements and conveniences about them, are an astonishment to Southern people, who are used to seeing, in every decent house, good, well-finished floors, with smoothly planed, narrow, clear-grained, close-fitting planks. What to do with the knotty, rough, irregular planks, covered with spots and splashes of paint left by the careless workmen, is a puzzling question to the housekeeper. The painter who is called in to remedy the evil has usually but one suggestion to make—the universal panacea—which is “Paint it,” and he goes on to expatiate upon the “elegant floors he has painted for so and so.” Do not be beguiled into painting your floor. Every footstep will leave a dusty impression, many repeated footsteps will leave it scratched and ugly beyond redemption by anything less than radical measures—which will bring you back to the naked planks.

First, if your floor has been already painted, or is covered with drippings from the paint-brush, cover the spots and splashes with caustic potash; leave this on till the paint is dissolved. It will take, perhaps, thirty-six hours to do this if the paint is old and hard; then have the floor well scoured, taking care not to let the mixture deface your wash-boards.

Secondly, if your flooring is marred by wide, ugly cracks between the planks, have them puttied, as they serve otherwise as a multitude of small dust-bins, and show an ugly stripe between your shining boards.

If the planks are narrow and of equal width, you can have them stained alternately light and dark—oak and walnut. In that case, stain the whole floor oak, and then do the alternate stripes dark. The staining mixture can be bought at any paint-shop, or can be ordered from any city, and brought by express in sealed cans. In almost every case it is safe to dilute the staining mixture with an equal quantity of turpentine. I have never seen or used any which was not far too thick as it is bought. It helps very much, when staining in stripes, to lay two boards carefully on each side of the stripe to be stained,

and then draw the brush between. This guards the plank from an accidental false stroke of your brush, and saves time to the aching back. If, however, the dark staining should chance to run over on the light plank, before it dries wipe it off with a bit of flannel dipped in turpentine.

When the floor is to be all walnut, the best staining I have ever seen is done without the use of a brush. Buy at a grocer's—for a single medium-sized room—a one-pound can of burnt umber, ground in oil. Mix with *boiled* linseed oil a sufficient amount of this to color properly without perceptibly thickening the oil; by trying the mixture upon a bit of wood till the desired color is attained, the quantity can easily be determined. It should be a rich walnut brown. Rub this into the wood thoroughly with a woolen cloth, rubbing it off with another woolen cloth till the stain ceases to “come off.” Never be beguiled into using boiled oil to keep the floor in order, for it is more like a varnish than an oil, and after the pores of the wood have once become filled, it lies on the surface, attracting and holding dust till it ruins the wood, and can only be removed by the use of caustic potash, sand-paper, or the plane. But this first, or any subsequent *coloring* of the floor must be done as here directed.

If you find, when the coloring matter dries, that it is not dark enough, rub on another coat. Do not be discouraged that your floors look dull and poor, for they only need a few weeks of proper care to be what you want.

When the staining is done, prepare for the next day's waxing. Mix turpentine and yellow bees-wax in the proportion of one gallon of turpentine to one pound of wax, shaved thin. Let the wax soak all night, or longer, in the turpentine before using; then rub it on with a woolen cloth. A few times of using this will make the floor gain a polish like that of an old-fashioned table-top. At first it must be done frequently, but beyond the smell of the turpentine, which soon passes off, and the trouble of applying, it has no disadvantage. When the wood finally becomes well polished, the wax need not be applied oftener than once a week or even once a fort-

night. The floor, in the meantime, can be dusted off by passing over it an old broom or hair floor-brush, with a piece of slightly moistened rag tied around it. Everything that falls upon it lies upon its surface, as on that of varnished furniture. Nothing ever really soils it. It can, of course, be washed up, but never needs scrubbing.

Now for the rugs. A room, unless it is very full of furniture, never looks well with bits and scraps of rugs about it. The main open space should be covered by a large rug, if possible. The rug need not be so expensive as a carpet, for it can be made of American Smyrna, velvet, Brussels, or even ingrain carpeting, edged with a border to match. It should cover the open space in the middle of the room, and be held down, if possible, here and there, by the heaviest pieces of furniture. If made of carpeting, it is better to have it made by the firm of whom it is bought, as home-made rugs usually bear the impress of domestic manufacture. They need, after being sewed, to be shrunk and pressed, so as to lie flat and smooth and perfectly square.

Of the domestic and imported rugs there is a great variety, with a corresponding range of prices. The Pennsylvania rugs—imitation Smyrna—are exceedingly pretty, and are gotten up in pleasing colors—olives and crimsons and blues; but the occidental appreciation of color is crude and vulgar compared to the oriental; and the domestic rugs, even the prettiest, smack of the designer and the loom, while the oriental ones often show an audacity of color and design in detail which produces a charmingly harmonious result.

The Indian designs are dark and rich and somber, but very beautiful, while the Turkish are bright and vivid, and are far handsomer when toned down by wear than at first. The Persian are scarcely to be distinguished from the Turkish by the uninitiated. The Smyrna or Oushak rugs usually have a vivid cardinal center, broken by set figures and surrounded by a border of deep, rich, harmonious tints, or else they are of the old-fashioned colors, brick-dust red with indigo-blue, a somberer combination, but one of which the eye never tires.

Rugs, like wine, grow more valuable as they grow older. Not with our usage, scampered over by children with muddy boots, or trodden by the heeled shoes of adults, but with the Eastern usage, they are worn from their original woolliness of surface to an exquisite sheen, almost like that of silk plush, and are sold, half-worn, for prices above what the new ones bring.

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### BEST PARLORS.

PEOPLE just returned from Europe are apt to say (and to be laughed at for saying), "You can't think how it strikes us that there is no 'society' here at home. There are balls enough, and dinners; we drink tea with our relations, and in the country partake of fifteen kinds of cake at the sewing-circle. But of 'society,' as the word is understood abroad, there is none,—no habit of reunion—no necessity for social life. People enough there are, and nice people, too, but they are all so dreadfully busy. They accept an occasional party as dire necessity, and repay the obligation at stated intervals, as they settle their butcher's bill. But they do not even pretend to find pleasure in it. Each family is intrenched within itself, and sits habitually with draw-bridge up, and doors barred to the outer world. And yet 't is pity, with such good material for better things. There are 'bricks' enough and to spare in our highly favored land, but mortar is wanting to make them adhere together."

Such is the wail which breaks from many a returned traveler. And though we may scold and resent, it were vain to deny some reason at the bottom of these jeremiads. Something *is* lacking—which those of us unacquainted with Paris *salons* miss. Our homes are the narrower that they do not more easily open to receive outsiders, not every day nor all days, perhaps,—due space must be left for family privacies,—but frequently, liberally, and without effort.



No formal entertainment and invitation should be needful. Let it once be understood that a pleasant family are regularly at home on certain evenings of the week and happy to see their friends, and the rest follows as a matter of course. People come for the pleasure of coming—come to meet other people—come to enjoy the atmosphere which any home worthy the name diffuses over a far wider circle than that which daily gathers about its hearth-stone. And there is real education and growth, especially for the young, in society like this; none whatever in a yearly ball, heralded by printed cards and Delmonico's *menu*, and wound up by a flourish of trumpets in the "Social Slop-Jar."

These evening reunions were the animus of the Paris *salon* in the days of its glory. Society was compacted and welded into form by constant attrition. "How can I fail to know him well," said the old Marquise, "when for twenty-six years I have passed five evenings a week in his society?"

But how if the mistress of the *salon* had spent her time habitually in the basement dining-room, and only when the bell rang to answer visitors, had hurried upstairs to change her cap and send a maid to light the gas? Would these pleasant little circles have been so apt to convene? And precisely here it is that the "best parlor" question comes in.

Almost every American house possesses one of these dreadful altars, erected to what unknown goddess it is impossible to guess. It is a Bogy, before whom from time to time people burn gas in chandeliers of fearful design—to whom are dedicated flagrant carpets, impossible oil paintings, furniture too gorgeous for common day and shrouded therefrom by customary Holland. Musty smells belong to this deity, stiffness, angles, absence of sunlight. The visitor, entering, sees written above the portal: "Who enters here abandons—conversation." What is there to talk about in a room dark as the Domdaniel, except where one crack in a reluctant shutter reveals a stand of wax-flowers under glass, and a dimly described hostess, who evidently waits only your departure to

extinguish that solitary ray? The voice instinctively hushes; the mind finds itself barren of ideas. A few dreary common-places are exchanged, then a rise, a rustle, the door is gained and the light of the blessed sun; you glance up in passing—flap goes the blind, inner darkness is again resumed, Bogy has it all his own way, and you thank your stars that you have done your duty by the Browns for at least a twelvemonth!

And yet, upon this dismal apartment, which she hates and all her acquaintances hate, poor Mrs. Brown has lavished time and money enough to make two rooms charming. For ugly things cost as much as pretty ones—often more. And costly ugliness is, as Mrs. Brown would tell you, a “great responsibility to take care of.” What with the carpet which must n’t get faded, the mirrors which must n’t get fly-specked, the gilding which must n’t be tarnished, there is nothing for it but to shut the room up to darkness and all dull influences. And as families are like flies and *will* follow the sun, the domestic life comes to be led anywhere rather than in the best parlor, and the “taboo” which Mrs. Brown proclaims is easily enforced.

And yet this very Mrs. Brown is quick to recognize the difference when, in other people’s homes, she is shown a cozy and pleasant room. She sits on a chintz sofa in her velvet and ermine, and glances half enviously at the tinted walls hung with photographs, at the sparkling little fire in the grate, the windows gay with sun and green things, the book-cases and tables loaded with volumes. “How I admire an open fire!” she says. “But does n’t it make a great deal of dust? And your plants, too—I can’t think how you make them grow so well in a *parlor*.”

“A little Croton and plenty of sun is all the secret,” she is told.

“Oh, but how dreadfully faded your carpet must get!” she goes on. “Such quantities of books, too. Well, I should like to have such things.”

It does not occur to the good lady that, for the price of one of those useless mirrors which cost her such anxiety and rub-

bing with chamois-skin, a choice company of poets, philosophers, and sages could be won to sit forever at her side, informing her with their wisdom. Or that for a tithe of the same her fireless grate would sparkle with cannel coal for a winter long. Her furniture, her carpets, the dullness of her home, are incumbrances truly, but incumbrances which she bears willingly and would not be without.

And people having the right to live pretty much as they please, so long as they violate no law of the land, it would matter little, except that there are so many Browns and so many best parlors that society is seriously affected thereby. For a system which necessitates great and troublesome changes in family arrangement whenever a guest comes, tends to narrowness and inhospitality. If the covers must be taken off the furniture, the plated spoons go upstairs and the silver ones come down, the best china be lifted from a top shelf, upon the arrival of each friend, be sure that friend will seldom arrive. Only when what Mrs. Stowe calls "a good liberal average" is established as a rule over *all* houses, will hearty interchange of social courtesies begin, and the communion of friends, face to face, be regarded as a pleasure rather than a toil.

To those of us who have been tasting the summer in the sweet breadth and freedom of the country, our homes will seem dull and straitened enough as we reënter them. Now is the time, before the old habitual scales blind our eyes, to look about with anointed vision, and see how these homes can be brightened and broadened—made more like that lovely outdoor home to which Nature welcomes each new-comer. Above all, let us cast out the "Best Parlor." To the sacred inclosure once called by that name let us bring our daintier tasks of letter-writing, needle-work, study. Let the walls be beautified with every simple ornament within our reach—the windows opened to receive the sun, and vines and roses set to catch his shining. And over the door once sacred to "Bogy" let us write "Welcome." And so the last shadow of the Bogy will depart, and our homes be very homes indeed,

"From turret to foundation-stone."

*TOO MUCH DECORATION.*

LADIES who live in the country are particularly liable to “overdo” their decoration. They get many a hint of beautiful objects that can be made with little trouble, from magazines and papers, and they must needs try their skill in constructing the pretty knickknacks. Sometimes a beautiful ornament is thus made; but many times the lack of the needful materials, so easily procured in the city, but so difficult to find in the country, will cause a poor imitation of what was designed to be a “thing of beauty.” We might cite many examples of this enthusiastic pursuit of various kinds of fancy-work—worsted-work, for instance. We shudder to think of the time spent,—wasted,—the eyes ruined, over ugly pieces of embroidery—ottomans, pillows, slippers, etc. Just now the mania is for painting upon pottery. With able instruction this enthusiasm might be turned into good channels. But what shall be said of that invention of some mediocre mind—the pasting upon ginger-jars of cheap and tawdry pictures? When we see our shelves and tables covered with these vases, match-safes, cigar-holders, etc., and know that, from regard to the feelings of the young artists, these must be placed in a conspicuous position and favorable light, we are in danger of wishing that all pottery could be buried so deep in the ground that even the indefatigable Schliemann could not unearth it. A parlor ought not to be littered with such trifles. Better a few good and not costly pictures, such as engravings, or Braun’s autotypes of celebrated paintings, in inexpensive frames; ornaments sparingly used, but beautiful in themselves and from association; a very few thrifty plants, not too delicate, but those that will give plenty of flowers and will not require all the sunshine; best of all, good books in plain cases. Leave space for the new volume and the magazine upon the table, and for the bright evening lamp; space upon the floor for the children’s toys, and for themselves to frolic; and let not even the honest dog or the gentle cat be banished lest they break or mar some frail



piece of fancy-work. So shall we be kept from the worry and care of too many treasures, and find time for reading, for study, for play with the little ones, and perhaps for practicing at times the almost lost art of plain sewing.

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### *BREAKFAST, SOCIALLY CONSIDERED.*

BREAKFAST, according to the usual American idea, is a hurried half-way place of entertainment between bed and business; a mere halt for supplies before taking the road; a glimpse at the new day through the medium of a grumpish dressing-gown, buckwheat cakes, and a damp newspaper; a whispered colloquy with the cook going on at one end of the table, and the children scuffling off to school from the other. It was our neighbors in Boston, we believe, who first gave us the hint of its æsthetic and hospitable capabilities. The late dinners of city life long ago thrust from us the possibility of keeping up the old-fashioned pleasant meal of "tea," about which the whole family, and its one or two favorite guests, were wont to gather. It was a lucky thought in somebody to transfer its charm and uses back to breakfast, the early morning hours being, for most business men, the real leisure of the day.

Dinner is always more or less a matter of state and preparation, to which we carry all the burden of anxiety rolled up since morning; our very jokes are feverish and eager; but at breakfast we stand at ease in mind and body. The house is clean and freshly dressed. Joe and Bob have not yet begun to squabble; the coffee sends a hungry whiff through the bright, frosty air; the fresh dew, in a word, sparkles for us, not only on the glass of red roses on the table, but on all the world outside; what better time is there to call our friend into the house that we may together "give the sun good-morrow"? Invitations to breakfast are almost as common as to dinner latterly

in the cities ; but there is a difference between them, as everybody knows. You do not ask a man to breakfast with whom you have to wear any sort of defensive armor ; he is coming into your friendship by a short cut. There is no such intimate hobnobbing as that over a cup of coffee and a first cigar. He sees your wife in her pretty muslin wrapper, and the baby is brought in to be kissed, fresh from its bath. There will always hereafter be a subtile home flavor in his remembrance of you. You can never again be to him nothing but a bull or a bear. There are nice distinctions in the hospitalities of city life which have not penetrated to provincial society. In town, where money can command any luxury for the table at a moment's notice, and where Johns and Johnson have the same amount of money, these worthies, when they would regale each other, must have recourse to some other attraction than victuals and cookery. Art, music, culture of every kind, are taxed to their utmost limits to offer an entertainment of thought, of brain as well as body, in the universal, rapid, touch-and-go habit of town hospitality. Unfortunately, out of the cities, we Americans are too apt to cherish the old English creed, that hospitality is purely an affair of the stomach. In farm neighborhoods and villages, the man of note must be a good "provider," and his wife a notable housekeeper, with cellars packed with potatoes and bacon, and pantries stored with jellies and pickles, to support their social claims. Who has ever assisted at the preparation of a New England Thanksgiving, a tea-party in Pennsylvania, or a dinner at the West, and does not remember the weariness of brain and agonies of muscle, out of which the baked meats, the cakes, the ice-creams, many colored, were evolved ? If, unluckily, the would-be host or hostess has lately "gone East," and dined with Johns or Johnson, they are sure to attempt an imitation of what impressed them as "city style," and end in a vulgarized reproduction of that vulgar thing—outside show. We have known delicate, fair young brides devote their last weeks of maidenhood to baking enormous masses of cake, and covering them with icing, in order to have a "more fashionable spread" than their neighbors.

And we remember one gently bred and cultured woman who spent two days in a hot cellar trying to reproduce some spun-sugar abomination in imitation of the masterpiece of a city confectioner, while flowers of priceless beauty were blooming all around her, ready to decorate her table; and after that, to drill the man-of-all-work into some similitude of a trained footman! What can be done to open the eyes of such a woman? Ordinary sense and tact ought to teach her that cookery and serving, like a woman's dress, are only perfect when there is nothing about them to be remembered. It needs, perhaps, wider intercourse with the world to show her that true hospitality includes the giving to our friend a glimpse of our home life, of our real selves—some drops of whatever best cordial knowledge, or art, or life has brought to us, as well as the choicest dish out of our kitchen.

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### *HOME DECORATIONS—SCREENS AND PORTIÈRES.*

LOOK for a moment at the dull drawing-room of that period before the decorative leaven began its work within our homes, when chairs and sofas were ranged with mathematical precision against long, unornamented walls; when the piano was set between the two chimney-pieces, where fire never was; when the center-table stood beneath the chandelier; the windows were darkened by lace and brocatelle, the shades drawn down, the register turned on, and, as was most natural, the "best room" abandoned to its melancholy state!

It often happens that the home into which a young couple turn their steps is one of the old-fashioned, discouraging kind, with that supreme stumbling-block to decorators—the long, narrow parlor—staring them in the face at the outset. We will suppose that the walls have been rehung with one of the

papers so common now, that are furniture in themselves as well as pictures and sunshine, and that one of the obnoxious twin chimney-pieces has been removed, and a book-case or cabinet set in its place, the other widened out for a low basket-grate, and framed in porcelain tiles. "It will be always long and narrow, like Barbara Allen's coffin!" says the mistress of such a room, in vexation. Let us quote for her benefit the bright saying of that essentially womanly woman, Delphine de Girardin, masquerading in her letters under the title of the Viscomte de Launay. "Set your wits to work," she counsels; "scatter your furniture, make little corners everywhere, and invest them with a sort of mysterious intimacy. Strew your lounges with pillows, your tables with books and flowers and work. Let each nook betray some trait or fancy of its mistress; and be sure that you can accomplish nothing of all this without the aid of screens. Above everything, screens."

She might have added, being a genuine *Parisienne*, "Where screens fail, try *portières*." The long room, divided beneath its customary stucco arch with a richly colored drapery, flowing full and free with the unbroken sweep of the stuff, becomes at once invested with a picturesque grace it could never otherwise acquire. This curtain should always be partly drawn, and the brass rod from which it depends set low enough to allow a glimpse, into the space beyond, of ceiling and frieze,—over door-shelf glittering with blue china,—Christmas holly, perchance, stuck in the frame of a convex mirror,—plaques and picture-rods. A *portière* of Venetian yellow stuff, with an embossed pattern of conventionalized birds and branches upon it, hung thus in a dark room, is like sunshine in the rift of a shady wood. The tawny shades in drapery, the ambers, the old gold, the deep umber browns, the sunflower yellow, and the warm, golden chestnut, are almost sure to chime in delightfully, hang them where you will. Next come the royal crimsons and maroons. In plush-hangings, these colors succeed remarkably well, and should be crossed with bands, or edged with borders in outline embroidery, in contrasting hues. Sage-greens, lizard-greens, and bronze-



greens are always satisfactory. In blue, the dull tints of the oriental fabrics wear better in a room than any more bright and positive. If these hangings, to be had now at various prices, are beyond the purse of the housewife, there are still numberless stuffs with which clever fingers can deal skillfully and produce artistic effects, at a merely nominal cost. Linen, momie-cloth, canton-flannels dyed in lovely shades, cheese-cloth, ordinary coarse flannel in soft hues, can be bought very cheap and made up with home embroidery in bands. It is, in fact, quite an additional pleasure to make and hang these curtains for oneself, and to snap one's fingers at the shopmen, who walk serene amid encompassing draperies, like the people in "Arabian Nights," and smile compassionately at the request to purchase anything at a price smaller than a king's ransom.

Mme. de Girardin's indispensable, the *paravent*, or screen, is now a familiar inmate in our homes. One runs upon Japanese screens in hall-ways, where they shut off the servants' stair-way to regions below and light up dark corners with a superb collocation of colors, as striking as the bold assembling of native figures and birds and flowers in the design. Again, in the dining-room, the butler's pantry, with its mysterious vista of meals before and after service, is safely excluded from our view. The revelers in "Noctes Ambrosianæ" found a reporter in their camp hidden behind such an ambush; and others than mischievous Lady Teazle have taken refuge there, in hasty escape from some intrusive guest. The small fire-screen, swung like a movable banner from the chimney, or set in a frame to move from place to place, invites decorative treatment. A bunch of peacock feathers, embroidered upon old-gold silk and set in an ebonized frame, had great success at a recent exhibition. Screens worked in crewels upon satin or English serge, in panels, may employ any design that is not too strictly copied from Nature. By all means avoid reproducing Nature in crewel-work, if you wish to silence the howl of the critics on such points. Conventionalize her, and you may receive the blessing of a Decorative Art Society.

The drawing-room threefold screen, set at the back of a couch or near a draughty door-way, is often worked on panels of satin and set in a frame-work of deep maroon plush. Again, these panels are painted with water-colors in beautiful, but perishable-looking, flower groups. Hand-screens, and lamp-screens like tiny banners, are also used.

All of these hints are offered for the consideration of the young people about to marry, and, in due time, to enter upon house-furnishing—of whom, as of most other good commodities, there is always a fresh supply coming on the market. If we have unconsciously alarmed the *amour-propre* of the head of the house by suggesting that he is, for a brief time, carried away and submerged by billows of Venetian gold tapestry and mediæval momie-cloth, we can as safely predict that his reward will come in the abounding joy with which he takes possession of the new home.

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### THE BOYS' ROOM.

TOO little attention is paid by young people, when buying or building a house, to the future requirements of the babies still in their cribs. The time passes more quickly than they thought. Bob and Joe and Tom are soon big, burly lads, apt to shoulder and kick each other if brought into too close contact; and Nelly and Bess, young ladies, each with her array of bosom friends, books, love-letters, and crimping-irons; and for them all there are but the two small chambers, one of which has often to be vacated when a guest arrives. The boys, in most cases, fare worse than any other members of the family. Their sisters' chamber is dainty and prettily furnished, while they are huddled into the garret or whatever other uncomfortable cubby-hole offers itself in which they can "rough it"; in the case of farmers' sons, this apartment often is the loft of the carriage-house. Now, if a boy's tendency is stronger than a girl's to be disorderly, untidy in his habits, and lacking in per-

sonal reserve or a love for the beautiful, it is the more necessary that he should be taught these things from his earliest childhood. Much of the want of refinement, the nervous debility, and other evils of both body and mind which inhere to Americans, are caused by the habit of crowding boys together into ill-ventilated, ugly, meagerly furnished chambers. No weak, nervous child can sleep with one of stronger physique without suffering a loss of nervous vitality and power. Each child in a family should have its own bed, and at the proper age its own chamber; beds and chambers to be clean, orderly, and as prettily furnished as the parents' means will allow. Especially is this a necessity with the daughters of a house. Every mother will remember how dear to herself, in her girlish days, was the chance of seclusion—the chest of drawers where she could store away her laces, ribbons, and other dearer trifles; the locked desk, with the diary inside; the white chamber, with its snowy curtains, where she could hang her dried ferns and photographs, and sit alone to ponder over her compositions, or read her Bible. A boy has his fancies, tastes, hobbies, as well as a girl. He may not want seclusion, but he does want elbow-room, and he ought to have it. Bob is a mighty fisherman, and clutters up the one closet with poles and lines, hooks, and books of flies. Jim has reached the autograph stage, and must have a desk and quires of paper with which to assault everybody mentioned in the newspapers, from Longfellow to Buffalo Bill. Tom has a mass of old rubbish collected at junk-shops, having caught the curiophobia from his mother; and Bill heaps on top of all his balls, bats, old shoes, and half-eaten apples.

Of course, it is expensive to give to each boy room for his hobbies and belongings; but, after all, it will not cost half as much as to refurnish the drawing-room with Turkish rugs and furniture from Sypher's. And do we owe most to our neighbors, or our boys? Whose tastes, habits of order, cleanliness, delicacy, ought we to cultivate?

We wish, however, especially to urge upon mothers the propriety of giving up to the boys, as soon as they reach the

age of twelve or fourteen, one room (not a bed-chamber) for whose (reasonably) good order they shall be responsible, and which they shall consider wholly their own. The floor should be uncarpeted, of oiled wood; the furniture of the same material. Let it be papered, curtained, decorated according to the boys' own fancy; if the taste is bad, they will be interested after a while in correcting it. There should be plain book-cases, a big, solid table in the center, by all means an open fire, and room after that for Joe's printing-press, or Charley's box of tools, or Sam's cabinet of minerals; for chess and checker boards, or any other game which is deemed proper. To this room the boys should be allowed to invite their friends, and learn how to be hospitable hosts even to the extent of an innocent little feast now and then. Father, mother, and sisters should refrain from entering it except as guests; and, our word for it, they will be doubly honored and welcomed when they do come.

Somebody will ask, no doubt, what is the use of pampering boys in this way, or of catering to them with games and company? Simply because they will have the amusement, the games and company, somehow and somewhere; and if not under their father's roof, with such quiet surroundings as befit those who are to be bred as gentlemen, the games may be gambling, and the company and suppers those which the nearest tavern affords. As for the cost, no money is ill spent which develops in a right direction a boy's healthy character or idiosyncrasies at the most perilous period of his life, or which helps to soften and humanize him, and to make more dear and attractive his home and family. If it can be ill spared, let it be withdrawn for this purpose from dress, household luxury, the sum laid by for a rainy day—even from other charities and duties. We do not wish to help the lad sow his wild oats, but to take care that the oats are not wild, and are thoroughly well sown.







THE OPEN FIRE.

*WOOD FIRES.*

WE grant that an open fire is "incompetent to heat our houses"; but we believe it can be made such an important factor in the culture of children, that we have no hesitation in urging others to try it. In houses that are wholly warmed by furnace, the family circle is likely to become impaired. The children take their friends to their own rooms, and the mother rarely becomes intimately acquainted with their associates. Around a wood fire, all naturally come together; what interests one, comes in a little while to interest all, and the children learn to be open and free. The fire warms the heart as well as the body. A wood fire lit early in the evening, when the children are home from school, is all that is necessary. When the boys get used to coming in from the cold and snow to find a cheerful hickory fire blazing on the parlor hearth, with the room not too nicely furnished for them to use, they will not want to leave it for any outside attractions. The moment the familiar whistle is heard in the evening, let some kindling wood be thrust under the logs. The pleasant sensation produced by a blazing fire, if repeated every day, winter after winter, amounts to a great deal of happiness in a boy's life-time, and will never be forgotten. It is difficult to overestimate the value of this central gathering-place for the whole family. Wood fires are not dusty, and when used not for heat, but for cheer, and only in the evening, are not costly. The moderate heat of a furnace or stove is sufficient for the parlor by day, and but little wood in the fire-place is necessary to make it comfortable at night. Indeed, the register often has to be turned off and the doors have to be closed to keep the heat of the house from rushing into the parlor. The wood fire ventilates, and thus not only are the feet kept warm, but the head remains cool. Half a cord of hickory wood lasts us about a month, and we use it on Sundays after church, and on other days if we have friends to dinner, or the children are to be at home. In spring and fall an open fire-place is particularly useful. Every one knows



how the furnace is disliked in moderate weather, but by using at such times the wood alone, the desired heat is obtained, and far more than the cost saved in the coal that would be burned to waste. If the fire-place is painted black, there will be a good background for the red flame, and the brick-work will not be made to look shabby by the smoke. Let it be a good, hearty, blazing fire, or none at all. Better to save in fine furniture, or in rich desserts, than put on logs sparingly. Brass andirons are the best, for they never wear out, and the labor in keeping them bright is much exaggerated. The wood should be sawed in but two pieces, so as to reach clear over both andirons. A lot of corn-cobs will make a hot, quick blaze, just before the children go up to bed, and will make their slumber all the sweeter.

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#### *NEWSPAPERS, DOMESTICALLY CONSIDERED.*

TOO low an estimate is apt to be set on the domestic value of newspapers. After reading them, and putting ourselves, through their agency, in mental correspondence with the world, they are thrown aside and forgotten. But to suppose their usefulness bounded by their news columns and the waste-bag is a thriftless mistake.

In the first place, there are the household recipes to be found in stray corners, often excellent, and deserving a refuge on the fly-leaf of the family cook-book. Then come the pretty verses, the strange and droll stories, the brief biographies and reminiscences which, pasted in a scrap-book, are a source of never-ending pleasure, not only to those who do not care for richer intellectual food, but to those who have only odd minutes for reading.

Notwithstanding the squibs jocular journalists have penned on the use of newspapers for bed-clothing, we know from



experience that these are not to be despised. They may not be as comfortable as your blankets, but certainly they keep out the cold. Two thicknesses of papers are better than a pair of blankets, and in the case of persons who dislike the weight of many bed-clothes, they are invaluable. A spread made of a double layer of papers, between a covering of calico or chintz, is desirable in every household. The papers should be tacked together with thread, and also basted to the covering to keep them from slipping. An objection has been made on account of the rustling, but if soft papers be chosen the noise will not be annoying, especially should the spread be laid between a blanket and the counterpane.

As a protection to plants against cold, both in and out of doors, nothing is better. If newspapers are pinned up over night at a window between pots and glass, the flowers will not only not be frozen, but will not even get chilled, as they are so liable to be at this season. In the same way, if taken to cover garden-beds, on the frosty nights of early autumn, they will allow the plants to remain safely outdoors some time later than is common.

One of the oddest services to put our journals to is the keeping of ice in summer. An ingenious housekeeper recently discovered that her daily lump of ice would last nearly twice as long when wrapped in newspapers, and placed in any kind of covered box, as when trusted solely to a refrigerator. This is very convenient, since it is possible to have the best and cheapest refrigerator constantly at hand.

To polish all kinds of glass after washing, except table glass, no cloth or flannel is half so good as a newspaper; and for a baker's dozen of other uses, quite foreign to its primal purpose, it is without rival.

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*HINTS IN HOUSE-CLEANING TIME.*

THESE are the days of the year when, according to all housewives' creeds, the house must be regenerated. Not, of course, the city house; neither the brown-stone palace on Murray Hill, nor even the milder expressions of brick and mortar grandeur on quiet side-streets; at this season fashion demands that these shall lapse into brown Holland and dust, and lie torpid until October. But from sea to sea, in all the towns, and villages, and farm-places, the innumerable legions of two-story brick houses and wooden villas have just undergone the swashing and drenching of spring cleaning, and their anxious mistresses are eagerly considering how they may be made more comfortable and prettier for the coming year. This is the proper season for such preparation, the winter stoves and their dust being at an end, and the farm work, and canning, preserving, and meat-salting, not yet begun. We have a word or two of advice to these housekeepers, with ambitious desires and lean pocket-books, who never saw an "artistic upholsterer," and to whom *bric-à-brac*, or *proofs before letters*, are phrases of an unknown tongue.

*First.* The principal object of hopeless longing is, nine times in ten, a new carpet. Now, why a carpet at all? It will require at least two-thirds of the money you allot for furnishing—it always does. No doubt the horrible rumor will spread through the village that Mrs. B—— "is reduced to bare floors." But you can retaliate and triumph by citing the most costly houses in New York, furnished in the native woods—the very wood which grows at your back door; that is, if you are not strong enough to possess your soul and pretty floor in silence and comfort. The floors of every new house should be finished with well-seasoned chestnut, ash, walnut, or yellow pine, which may be either varnished or oiled. You have then a surface under your feet, with exquisite graining and color, which no loom can equal, and which never needs patch, darn, or renewal. In the living-room, chambers, or nursery, a carpet simply becomes a breeding-place of dust, impurity of air, and

disease. Color and warmth, if necessary, may be given by home-made mats, which can be removed and shaken every day, as are the costly skins, Persian and Egyptian rugs, in city houses.

*Second.* Having thus saved the price of the carpets, you can afford more to furniture and decoration; and just here we warn you to beware of the "cheap and pretty" system urged in many fashion periodicals. A substantial set of chamber furniture, of good wood and graceful outline, will outlast a dozen flimsy, painted cottage suits, and increase in softness of tone and beauty every year. The economical young housekeeper, too, is apt to cover her walls with chromos, which are given away by tea or life insurance companies, and which hopelessly vulgarize her own taste and that of her children; she pastes gilt paper on wood to make window-cornices; she makes barrel-chairs; she spends weeks and months of leisure time in sewing bits of colored cloth on Turkish toweling, or working silk and gold thread on canvas for chair-covers or afghans; the covers and afghans cost twice as much as clear-tinted woolen reps, and are abominations to the eye; her time is wasted; the mock gilding spots will mildew in a month; the staves of the barrel give way, and the visitor collapses inside; the whole house is a palpable fraud, a cheap imitation, and an imitation which soon grows shabby, and requires perpetual renewal. There is no excuse in poverty for sham or flimsiness. The money invested in Turkish toweling, in decalcomanies, or potichomanies, would give to the walls of a room a soft, grateful color; furnish them with good photographs of the best pictures, and excellent casts of two or three of the greatest works of art; would buy strong, artistically made chairs; place a table in the center of the room; cover it with books and work, and fill the windows with living flowers and trailing ivy. In such a room there would be beauty, service, and an education for both mother and children. If our housekeeper will give her leisure time for a year to the study of her children, her photographs, and her flowers, she will be first to laugh at her sham gilding and monsters of fancy-work.

*ODD MINUTES OF WAITING.*

WHILE you are arranging the parlor, just have a thought for the visitors who must sometimes wait to see you, and carefully refrain from putting every object of interest beyond their reach. Of course, as a careful hostess, you never mean to keep callers waiting; but if they come when the baby is on the eve of dropping to sleep, or you are in the midst of planning dinner with the cook, you must delay a little, while they are reduced to staring out of the window, or to an involuntary effort to penetrate some insignificant household secret. The family photograph album is usually regarded as a sufficient resource in moments like these; but is there not something akin to indelicacy in allowing strangers and ordinary acquaintances to turn over the likenesses of our nearest and dearest—perhaps to criticise them with the freedom of unfamiliarity, or the unsympathy natural to a lack of personal appreciation?

The late magazines, a book of good engravings, a household volume of poetry, a stereoscope and views, photographs of foreign scenes, and a dozen other things, are all good aids to the occupation of stray minutes. Moreover, they often suggest to the visitor and the host topics of conversation more profitable and interesting than the state of the weather or the history of the kitchen.

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*A LOST METHOD OF EXPRESSION.*

CITY people, no doubt, labor under the impression that the “homes” of America are opened and cleansed after a summer of dust and darkness and quiet; and that “society” comes back to them like a scattered flock of brilliant birds to their nests, from mountain and sea-shore, the Yosemite and Europe. The fact is, that the number of people who leave home in summer, large as it is, is but as the foam upon the



ocean current compared to the vast quiet mass who stay in their houses the year round, and make, and want to make, no especial bruit therein at any time. In these houses, the summer is the busiest, cheerfulest, most hospitable time; and the fall, instead of bringing reunions and state dinners brightened with reminiscences of Newport, or Paris, or Mount Desert, is given over to canning, pickling, and preserving. City people who order their table luxuries and desserts from outside, as regularly as their coal and butter, have little idea of the momentous stir and excitement which pervade the kitchens in towns and villages all over the country when the fall fruits and vegetables come in; the anxious consultation between house-keepers as to the relative merits of different glass jars, or the probable crop of quinces, or the rumored failure of Bartlett pears. For, this higher branch of housewifery is seldom handed over to servants; it is the fine art of cookery, in which, in the West and South, the matrons are artists and young girls are instructed as a necessary qualification to marriage. When we remember a certain sunny, airy Pennsylvania kitchen that we have seen, with the wind from the autumn-tinted hills sweeping through it, and a bright-eyed little woman surveying her store of vegetables in shining cans and glass jars of yellow and crimson fruit; or a great pantry in Virginia, with a rosy-cheeked little girl, in white apron and tucked-up hair, ranging proudly on its shelves the rows of glasses of translucent jellies, amber, sea-green, and ruby; the mammoth jars of mysterious soys, and catsups, and pickles which she has evolved, with infinite skill and patience, out of a myriad of brass kettles, and weights, and spices, and all the products of the farm,—we protest the pictures are very pleasant to our eyes, and we feel that the women have done work as wholesome and fine as though they had conducted a public tea-party, or written a sickly poem, or delivered a lecture full of sound and hyperbole, meaning nothing.

It has been too much the fashion of late to decry this department of the work of housekeeping as useless and menial, and to insist that money ought to buy its result, leaving to the

wife and daughter time for self-improvement and higher duties. There can be no doubt that the average American housekeeper often becomes a slave to her store-closet, one-third of the year being spent in preparing food for the remainder; canned vegetables, salted meat, pickles, and preserves are often the mill-stone which drags her soul and body down to a very low level. But there is another side to the subject, and we may strike the just middle-ground on it as on any other. Nobody wants a George Eliot, or Florence Nightingale, or Jessie Fremont, to give her time to compounding piccalillis or preserves. But, while one woman is a leader in society, literature, or philanthropy, ninety-nine adopt some smaller way to make themselves useful and helpful in bettering and brightening the little world about them, and these smaller ways in city life are frequently incessant devotion to visiting, to music, to making horrible and exhausting efforts at house decoration. We confess that when we have sat down to feasts where the vegetables smacked too strongly of the professional canner's art, where the meats were ill-cooked, the offense of the pickles was rank with vitriol, and the desserts bore that inextinguishable flavor of the confectioner's shop, and when, after dinner, we have been called on to listen to feeble strumming of the piano, or weak criticisms on the last exhibition, or to admire works of art in the shape of spatterdash, or Persian embroideries on Turkish towel-ing, we have remembered the busy Pennsylvania kitchen and the bountiful tables of old Virginia matrons; the delicious flavor, idiosyncrasy, if we may call it so, of every dish; the care with which the father's taste in soups, and the boys' fancy for certain jams, were remembered from year to year; the thousand ways in which skill and good taste and affection were shown in this base art of cookery; the genuine, home-made flavor of the dishes, the talk, the very fun—we are not at all sure that women, in ignoring this ancient craft so utterly, have not slighted one of their strongest modes of expression.

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*THE POETRY OF THE TABLE.*

IN the first place, a starched and smoothly ironed tablecloth—which, if neatly folded after every meal, will look well for several days. Then flowers and ferns in flat dishes, baskets, or small vases—or else a tiny nosegay laid upon every napkin.

The salt must be pure and smooth. The butter should be molded into criss-crossed diamonds, shells, or globes, with the paddles made for this purpose.

A few pretty dishes will make the plainest table glow—a small, bright-colored platter for pickles, horse-radish, or jelly; and butter-plates representing green leaves are also attractive.

A few pennies' worth of parsley or cress, mingled with small scraps of white paper daintily clipped, will cause a plain dish to assume the air of a French *entrée*. A platter of hash may be ornamented with an edging of toasted or fried bread cut into points; and a dish of mutton-chops is much more impressive with the bones stacked as soldiers stack their guns, forming a pyramid in the center—each bone adorned with a frill of cut paper. A few slices of lemon, mingled with sprigs of parsley and slices of hard-boiled eggs, form a pretty garnish to many dishes; and nothing could be more appetizing than beef, veal, mutton, or lamb made into mince-meat, and pressed into form in a wine-glass, then fried in pork fat, with a sprig of green placed in the top of each little cone. The basket of fruit—peaches, pears, grapes, or apples, oranges, and grapes—should be tastefully arranged and trimmed with leaves and flowers. The bowl of salad should be ornamented with the scarlet and orange flowers of the *tropæolum*—their piquant flavor adding zest to the lettuce, with which they can be eaten.

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*AROUND THE DINNER-TABLE.*

A MERELY bounteous table is not always welcome or appetizing. Two or three dishes, well prepared and daintily arranged, are superior to a dozen carelessly and inartistically put on. Hospitality is often confounded with profusion; and some of us are apt to believe that we play the host ill unless we persuade our guests into eating a great deal. This sort of entertainment is simply material, though it is commoner than we think.

The pleasures of the table should appeal to the eye and mind, as well as to the palate. Form should be consulted; grace should be indispensable. The savor of food gains much from its setting and its accompaniments. A few flowers, perfect order and neatness, with congeniality and sympathy about the board, will insure what an Apician feast might not.

The day of uniformity in table, as well as other furniture, has passed, the present fancy being for oddness and variety. This, apart from picturesqueness, is both convenient and economical, since the breaking of one or two pieces does not necessitate the purchase of an entire new set. It is not unusual now to see, on elegant breakfast-tables, each coffee-cup different from its neighbor, and no two of the plates alike. But it is at tea—most informal of meals—that the greatest variety and the prettiest effects may be produced.

Flowers have come to be indispensable to many tables, and they will be ere long, let us hope, indispensable to all. They need not be rare nor costly. They are so beautiful, even the plainest and poorest of them, that nothing else can supply their place. A few green leaves, a dozen way-side daisies, a bunch of violets, impart a charm and awake in us the touch of Nature.

But, more than all that is on the table, is the spirit brought to it. There can be no high enjoyment of the senses unattended by sympathy. Disquietude of mind at table is the precursor of indigestion. They who are invited to dinner, and take thereto anxiety and discontent, defraud the host of a



proper return for his hospitality. No one has a right to go socially where he does not hope to give some sort of compensation. The table-cloth should be the flag of truce in the battles of every-day life. We should respect it, and, in its presence, commend ourselves to peace.

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### *HOMEKEEPING VERSUS HOUSEKEEPING.*

THE truest homes are often in houses not especially well kept, where the comfort and happiness of the inmates, rather than the preservation of the furniture, are first consulted. The object of home is to be the center, the point of tenderest interest, the pivot on which family life turns. The first requisite is to make it attractive—so attractive that none of its inmates shall care to linger long outside its limits. All legitimate means should be employed to this end, and no effort spared that can contribute to the purpose. Many houses called homes, kept with waxy neatness by painstaking, anxious women, are so oppressive in their nicety as to exclude all home-feeling from their spotless precincts. The very name of home is synonymous with personal freedom and relaxation from care. But neither of these can be felt where such a mania for external cleanliness pervades the household as to render everything else subservient thereto. Many housewives, if they see a speck on floor or wall, or even a scrap of thread or bit of paper on the floor, rush at it, as if it were the seed of pestilence which must be removed on the instant. Their temper depends upon their maintenance of perfect purity and order. If there be any failure on their part, or any combination of circumstances against them, they fall into a pathetic despair, and can hardly be lifted out. They do not see that cheerfulness is more needful to home than all the spotlessness that ever shone. Their disposition to wage war upon macu-

lateness of any sort increases until they become slaves of the broom and dust-pan. Neatness is one thing and a state of perpetual house-cleaning quite another.

Out of this grows by degrees the feeling that certain things and apartments are too good for daily use. Hence, chairs and sofas are covered, and rooms shut up, save for special occasions, when they are permitted to reveal their violated sacredness in a manner that mars every pretense of hospitality. Nothing should be bought which is considered too fine for the fullest domestic appropriation. Far better is the plainest furniture, on which the children can climb, than satin and damask, which must be viewed with reverence. Where anything is reserved or secluded, to disguise the fact is extremely difficult. A chilly air wraps it around, and the repulsion of strangeness is experienced by the most insensible.

There are few persons who have not visited houses where they have been introduced to what is known as the company parlor. They must remember how uncomfortable they were while sitting in it; how they found it almost impossible to be at ease, and mainly for the reason that their host and hostess were not themselves at ease. The children were watched with lynx eyes, lest they should displace or soil something; so that the entertainment of friends became very much like a social discipline. They must recall, too, how sweet the fresh air seemed out-of-doors, and how they inwardly vowed, in leaving that temple of form and fidgetiness, that something more than politeness would be required to incite them to return.

Home is not a name, nor a form, nor a routine. It is a spirit, a presence, a principle. Material and method will not and can not make it. It must get its light and sweetness from those who inhabit it, from flowers and sunshine, from the sympathetic natures which, in their exercise of sympathy, can lay aside the tyranny of the broom and the awful duty of endless scrubbing.

*THE PENALTY OF MOVING.*

ADULTS are prone to think of this intolerable but often necessary annoyance only as it affects them. The influence of continuous change of abode is far more pernicious to children than is commonly imagined. At the time, they rather enjoy the topsy-turvy condition of things, and their love of novelty is gratified by going somewhere else. But, as they grow up,—and more after they have grown up,—they look back upon their past life, which should be full of home associations, as a sort of domestic game of “pussy-wants-a-corner.” They have no pleasant memory of household gods or household altars. The parental idea is marred by repeated shiftings from one roof to another before the filial feeling has had time to spread its tendrils, or even to take substantial root.

It is impossible to overestimate the effect of a pleasant home-life upon the mind as well as the heart. Men and women who have had happy homes in their childhood and youth will be anxious to re-create them by marriage and domesticity. Nothing of the sort can reasonably be expected where the home has been but a repetition of houses in which meals have been eaten and lodgings secured.

Hotels are notoriously bad for the rearing of children; and yet how much better is a dwelling occupied for one or two years, and then surrendered for another and another?

We Americans have not such an excess of domesticity as to be able to spare any of it. On the contrary, we need to cultivate all we have, instead of reducing the slender original stock by playing at hide-and-seek with our neighbors. Very often it is not possible for a family to stay in one place; but where it is possible, it should be made a domestic religion not to move.

Is it not probable that much of what is known as unhappy temperament,—the restlessness, irresolution, and despondency of after-life,—may have no meaner or profounder origin than the May-day inconveniences which annually thrust farther out of reach the possibilities of a substantial home-feeling?

*HOUSE AND HOME BUILDING.*

IN building the best class of New York City houses, or even the second class, the housekeeper's wants are considered with an insight and a minuteness of detail which are not to be found, perhaps, anywhere else. Our grandmothers, famous housewives as they were compared to their degenerate daughters, would be amazed at the appliances for the physical comfort and convenience, not only of master and mistress, but of cook and butler, in these splendid and honestly built mansions. But there are thousands of dwellings which spring up like mushrooms every year in this and other cities, as splendid outwardly, but by no means as honestly built. They are imitated in every provincial town and village; the uncomfortable and showy type of house is considered in fact "the style" by imitative people. We could name whole towns, not two hours from New York, composed of flamboyant pasteboard villas, gorgeously decorated without, and consisting within of a magnificent hall, drawing and dining rooms, and show chambers, while kitchen, pantries, and cellars are small, dark, and thrust, as far as may be, out of sight and existence altogether. Now, it is inconsiderate enough for the New York house-owner and his wife, who do not visit their kitchens or cellars twice a year, to make them uninhabitable, but for people to follow their example who are compelled to do their own work half of the time is a subservience to fashion only possible to a certain class of Americans. If any one be in doubt of our meaning, let him enter one of the "elegant and commodious mansions" built in blocks in New York and Philadelphia and offered at once for sale. It is useless to hope for reform in houses built frequently *en masse* by contract; but practical housekeepers here, or in villages in the far West, who build their own houses may not despise a few practical suggestions.

First, let your cellars be large, well ventilated, and lined with stone or cemented above the level of the ground. The breath of life in furnace-heated houses depends literally on the air in



the cellar, unless there be a flue for fresh air extending from the furnace out-of-doors (never the case in cheap, showy houses). The air of the whole house is sucked through this narrow and often unclean apartment, the care of which is usually intrusted to ignorant servants. Malaria is often engendered by massing quantities of vegetables in the cellars, as is the practice in farm-houses during the winter. The lining of stone or cement not only prevents dampness, but is absolutely necessary in streets through which the sewers pass, as a protection from rats. Terriers, ferrets, traps, or poison are feeble defenses against the legions which swarm in nightly from a neighboring culvert. Next to the cellars comes the kitchen, which should be large, airy, and sunny. To take no higher ground, conveniences in this department are a politic investment which pays a full interest of capital, especially to the housekeeper who does not live in a large city. Stationary tubs, closets beneath the dressers for flour, dry groceries, spices, etc., will be likely to tempt into her household a better class of servants, and when she is forced to turn cook and baker herself, will take half the burden from her weary hands. An addition to comfort much neglected by builders is the lighting of stair-ways, closets, pantries. We have in our mind's eye a modest little house, in a closely built neighborhood of dark dwellings, which gives you a sunny, cheerful welcome in every corner—a result produced not only by windows wherever a window is practicable, but by a sky-light of plate-glass, which sends down sunshine through three floors of closets, halls, and pantries. A mistake made, also, which resolves itself into a question of humanity, is the placing the servants' chambers on the top of the house, be that three or seven stories above the kitchen. Passing along a city street at night, one cannot look up at the dim lights burning in these far skyey attics without a groan of compassion for the wearied wretches dragging themselves to their beds up yonder after the day's hard labor.

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*NURSERY DECORATION AND HYGIENE.*

“MY idea of a model nursery,” said a fine lady, not long ago, “is a padded room, with barred windows, and everything in it, when not in use, hung out of reach upon the walls. Then, one might sit down-stairs in the drawing-room, and read, or practice, or receive, with a mind at rest.” But what of the melancholy little starlings caged above, piping their woful plaint, “I can’t get out”? And, in many cases, it is no wonder they should want to get out.

To the nursery are generally consigned, year after year, all the faded fineries from down-stairs, the worn carpets, the slightly soiled chintz, the decrepit tables and chairs. It is a *Hôtel des Invalides* for retired furniture. This, of course, does not refer to the first nursery, fitted up with floating draperies of pink and blue, with fine embroidery and cobweb lace, with costly cradle and dainty basket, for the installation of that unparalleled wonder—His Serene Highness, Baby Number One—with a prime minister in attendance, to whom all this magnificence appears but dross, whose manner is of the mildly enduring sort, as becomes one who has been used to better things, but, in spite of all, condescends to exalt with her presence, for a space, these humble scenes!

During a little while Baby reclines at ease amid his princely surroundings; but, by and by, when abandoned by his prime minister, the natural self-assertion of man takes possession of him. He kicks over the bassinet, rends his filmy envelope of silk and lawn, makes ducks and drakes of the interior of his dressing-basket, sets the ivory brushes afloat in his bath-tub, and cuts his teeth upon any object within reach, other than the coral and bells provided for the purpose by an infatuated godfather.

Then, at last, does an indignant and long-suffering household turn upon this aggressive ruler, and send him into banishment. An usurper sits upon his throne, who is, in turn, displaced, and goes to join his hapless comrade condemned to hard labor in the third-story Siberia; and so until the ranks are

full, till the pink and blue have faded out of the draperies, and a new baby has ceased to be a wonder.

To redress the wrongs of these little exiles, in the matter of brightening their place of retirement, is a task outside the limit of any society as yet organized in behalf of injured innocence, but none the less is worthy and important.

We enter the average nursery to find it, perhaps, darkened by heavy moreen curtains of a style compelling their retirement from any of the modernized rooms down-stairs; with a velvet or Brussels carpet, with half-effaced pattern of lilies and roses, long, since trodden into dingy uniformity of tint, and a rug of another color that, as they say in France, swears at all the rest. The paper upon the walls, soiled by finger-marks, has a pattern of green and yellow stripes. The furniture is cumbrous and shabby; the fire hidden from sight by an iron guard, where draperies forever hang. Homely articles of wearing apparel depend from door and chair-backs; combs and brushes mingle with medicine bottles and spoons upon the dressing-bureau. If the nurse rallies, in a frantic attempt to put things to rights, her idea, generally, is to clear the floor of blocks and toys, and rigidly taboo their re-appearance—bidding the children amuse themselves, very much as Miss Havisham solemnly exhorted poor Pip to play, when he, looking about vainly for the ways and means thereto, conceived a vague idea of turning somersaults! Over all, there is a tenement-house air that can hardly be realized by the visitor who has ascended, by slow degrees, through every stage of a beautifully decorated home.

This, not so common as of old, will be, in a short time, I hope, only the exception to the rule. There are sundry conditions leading to reform that cannot be too strongly enforced. It seems hardly necessary to suggest that the first essential is light—the pitiless foe to untidiness, the inspiration to cheerful thoughts, happy tempers, and healthy bodies. A nursery should, if possible, have a southern exposure—the windows guarded without by an iron net-work, which may be painted green with gilded top, rising above the level of the child's

shoulder, lest he be seized with a fancy to stand up there and survey the world when nobody is near. Inside this net-work an ivy may be trained, and a few pots of hardy scarlet geranium, wall-flower, and mignonette be placed, when spring comes in. To water these plants might be the reward for a day of good behavior in the nursery.

In this day of cheap and charming wall-papers, one has but to go to the nearest shop to find a dozen suggestions, any one of which will lend the nursery a charm, requiring but few additions, to transform any room into a cheerful home for the little folks. A dado of India matting, in red and white checks, is very popular, and goes far toward furnishing the room. In one nursery, the mother has left a space, three or four feet high above the weather-board, plain—for each child to contribute his own idea in decoration with pictures cut out of books and illustrated weeklies, and collected by himself.

Above, and not too high, should be hung pictures. Be liberal with these, and choice. Give your children Sir Joshua Reynolds's dainty little darlings for their companions, and engravings or plain photographs of any of the delightful little *genre* pictures of French, or English, or German art, that come to us so freely now. A picture with a moral will accomplish far more in early childhood than one of Æsop's fables. The first aspiration toward a career of true greatness may be struck into a boy's guileless nature as he stands gazing up at some scene which tells a tale of self-renouncing heroism.

"An open fire, and a kettle simmering upon the hob," are part of Sydney Smith's receipt for cheerfulness. His third ingredient, "a paper of sugar-plums upon the mantel-piece," would have a singular demoralizing effect, if introduced here! Hot air from a register, or from a close stove, though so universally condemned, is unfortunately too often used to be overlooked here; but an appliance to contain a liberal supply of water has lately been invented, and is now in successful use at the Nursery and Child's Hospital in New York, among other places, which is most valuable for moistening the air from furnace flues on its passage into a room. Where an open



hard-coal fire is used, a very simple suggestion, made a few years ago by one of the most distinguished medical authorities in New York (Dr. Lewis A. Sayre), is excellent. An ordinary kettle is set on a trivet by the open fire, and to the spout of this is affixed a tin tube, extended several feet above the level of the top of the fire-place, and ending in a wide-mouthed funnel, through which the steam pours night and day, the kettle being kept continually full of water. By means of this unpretending device, moisture is so distributed throughout the room as not to be drawn immediately up the chimney, the close and parched atmosphere of an anthracite fire is made soft and pleasant, and, in cases of croup or scarlet fever particularly, the benefit is wonderful. So much for adherence to the dogmas of that high-priest of cheerfulness, Sydney Smith.

It has come to be regarded as indispensable to the new *régime* that all carpets covering the floor shall be banished in favor of "strips, and bits, and rugs." May I enter a modest protest in behalf of a nursery carpet? Not only do the children slip and trip continually upon scattered pieces of carpet, but baby, whom you have established with all his belongings upon an island of rug, persists in abandoning it for the most distant and draughty corner of the stained-wood floor. Where the furniture is light, a three-ply carpet, taken away to be shaken every spring and autumn, can easily be kept clean by a respectable nurse.

The furniture should be solid, but not heavy. Each child should have a cot or crib to himself, with a free circulation of air about it. Where it is impossible to have another room for dressing purposes, threefold screens can be used, made of stout muslin, stretched upon a frame, and covered by mother, nurse, and little ones with all that remains of the lovely Christmas picture-books, rescued and cut out before it be too late. These pictures, Walter Crane's especially, may be pasted also in the panels of the doors, and gay lines of blue and gold and scarlet described around them. The paper-hangers have taken a great deal of this pleasant labor off our hands, by introducing

a wall-paper covered with the well-known scenes from "Baby's Opera" and "Baby's Bouquet."

Curtains should be limited in quantity and light in texture. Any pretty cretonne, blooming all over with pink roses, and green leaves, and gay birds, will delight a child, and the day coverings to the nurse's bed may be made of the same. For the children's beds there is nothing like spotless white. Another form of curtain, useful because it can be repeatedly washed throughout the season, is of plain white cotton stuff, bordered with figured Turkey-red and looped with bands of the same material. The only heading to these draperies should be a casing through which a light brass rod, fitted into sockets at each end, is run.

In regard to color, I should advocate leaving mediæval blues and dull sage-greens below stairs, in the library or boudoir given over to high art. Give the little ones the A, B, C of decoration, with plenty of warm, honest red and

"blue,  
Which will show your love is true."

In your mantel decoration don't forget a clock! It is necessary to the nurse, and valuable in every way to the children. I know of one nursery, where, at every hour and half-hour, two little white-robed figures, with "bangs" in front, and golden curls behind, run and stand before a small, carved, wooden shrine upon the wall, to wait the coming out of the cuckoo, and, confessing their sins, beg his pardon for their naughtiness. To them, he is a veritable Mentor.

I have said nothing of books, and blocks, and doll-houses, of gold-fish and canary birds, of tiny chairs and tables, of tea-sets, and broken rocking-horses, because, thank God! no home where there are children is wanting in these.

I have suggested the need for the little folks of light, and warmth, and beauty, during the many hours they must inevitably be away from the mother's side. I wish it were possible to obtain, also, for all of them, a glimpse of green turf and tree-tops, be it nothing better than a city park. As I write,

there comes to me the remembrance of a little fellow lying very ill in a bright and sunny room, while one member of the family after another came, with soft tread and tender voice, trying to woo him from the arms of his weary mother. There he lay, with tangled curls, with his beautiful face fever-flushed, and his great blue eyes asking pitifully for aid and rest from pain. At last, his father came into the room, and into that strong clasp the little sufferer went cheerfully. "Hold me up at the window, papa," he asked. "I want to see into the park." Wrapped in a shawl, he was kept in that position for an hour, gazing out at the trees, and talking at intervals about the birds, until, soothed and comforted, he fell into the calm, deep sleep so long and earnestly desired by his watchers—a slumber that ushered in recovery.

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### *IN MOVING-TIMES.*

THE most important thing to remember when you move from one house to another is not to lose your head. This being well secured, you may verify the adage and find the ordeal not worse than three fires; but if your head goes, and your temper follows suit, a Chicago conflagration is nothing to what your experiences will probably be. At the best of times, and under the most favorable conditions, to pack up, remove, and re-arrange your household goods and gods is as trying an infliction as we need wish for our worst enemy; but when this situation is complicated by a family moving into your old house, and another moving out of the new; when it is prolonged by workmen who paint where you are to sleep, paper where your pictures wait to go, and mend locks in the doors through which you must pass, a woman may have some excuse if she would like to say something, perhaps too expressive, but soothing to herself.

But when you have to move, it is well to try and bring a little forethought and judgment into the matter. The great trouble in re-arranging is the difficulty of finding anything you want. You do not remember where such and such an article was put, and so there come a hunt and a rough misplacement of everything. The kitchen china is found in the front bedroom, the winter clothes are in the bath-room, and the precious Sèvres cups and saucers half unpacked in the nursery. If everything could be packed at one's leisure, it could be arranged well enough; but, order as you will, there comes a climax of rush the day you move. The bed you are to sleep in to-night is the one you are just out of, and the supper-plates were used at breakfast-time; and when you pack so much at once, who can remember whether it was the pickle-jar or the molasses-jug that was put in a water-pitcher in the green tub?

But one thing you can do. You can carry a soft black pencil, or a piece of chalk, and even in the last moment can label as you pack. You need not mix the goods beyond a certain limit, and you can try to pack with some judgment. It will be found an excellent plan to make some good, strong, big bags for all kinds of odds and ends, for soiled clothes, for patches and bundles, for everything that will go into a bag, and be sure to mark them. For the kitchen articles, use barrels, and for books and breakables, boxes. All of these mark plainly in this way:

“KITCHEN, *pots and frying-pans.*” “KITCHEN, *tins.*”  
“SITTING-ROOM, *books for large book-case,*” etc.

Of course you will need boxes for brackets, for ornaments of all kinds; these you have in your bureau drawers. Underclothes, and most of the ordinary contents of a bureau, you can make into neat packages, and so save the drawers for other uses. Of your books be careful. If you cannot box them, do not allow the carmen to pile them loosely in the wagon. The china will generally go into washing-tubs and clothes-baskets. Save old towels and newspapers, with a view to packing the china. In one basket or tub ought to be placed a complete service for the first meal in the new house, including knives;



then another should have the provisions, and these should go by one of the first loads. Of course, meat ought to have been roasted, ham boiled, coffee ground, and milk and groceries secured. The first days of moving give but little time for cooking, and there is no ignoring the appetite you will get, nor the strength you will need.

If you want to "get fixed" soon, and with comfort, do not fail to have your carpets taken up, shaken, altered, and put down in your new house before you move even a nutmeg-grater. When they are down, the house will not only seem half arranged, but will be. The moving of furniture, to enable the men or yourself to fit and put down carpets, is so troublesome and useless that no one who has a head, and is able to use and follow it, will submit to anything so absurd. Of course, the hall and stair carpets are left until the furniture is all placed. In arranging your order of moving, do not allow the carmen to take the goods helter-skelter; but, as far as possible, move a room, a floor, at one time. This gives less chance of confusion, prevents running over the house, and is easier for the men. As to the order of moving, it is best to get your bedsteads and 'beds off by the first loads, so that you may be sure of a place to sleep. If anything happens to prevent your finishing in one day, you can do without your parlor furniture better than your bedding. Tie up the furniture of each bed in separate bundles, and mark each. You will find that mattresses in the room and in the wagon are very different in appearance, and if they are not marked, they will be very apt to get into the wrong rooms.

Do not trust too much to the judgment and care of your carmen. It is not easy to feel oneself master of such a situation as this; but it is best to try and make your people believe that you fancy yourself in power. And, speaking of carmen, if you have very fine furniture or pictures, it will pay you to engage a professional mover of such articles, if only for one load. The merit of the ordinary carman lies in his muscle, not his knowledge. Pianos, of course, demand special care.

And, finally, don't be discouraged by the general shabbiness of everything. It is a question whether Solomon's throne would have shown to advantage in a furniture wagon, and even if your sofas are torn and your chairs scratched, they have lost nothing in comfort or association, and you will probably find that they will settle down into their new places, and be as snug and cozy as of old.

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### *SERVANTS' ROOMS AND QUARTERS.*

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**S**ERVANTS' rooms should be papered, painted, kalsomined, curtained, and fitted up with nicety in every detail, with harmony in color, with womanly regard for womanly needs. Each maid should have a bed to herself; the blankets, spreads, and sheets passing from time to time under the eye of the mistress. The floor should be stained or oiled, and beside each cot should be laid a neat strip of carpet, or of the English "Napier" matting in stripes of maroon and écru hemp—than which one can find nothing more neat and durable. A dressing-glass in a good light, a chest of drawers for clothes, a pin-cushion, a picture or two, low splint-bottom chairs and ample washing apparatus, are little enough to bestow on the comfort of your maids, upon whom so much of your own comfort daily and hourly depends. Let them hang up their palms, and their photographs of cousins in Sunday clothes. Instead of a neck-ribbon, bestow upon them from time to time a little vase, a gay Japanese box, a "Holy Family," or a work-basket. Give them a helping hand, and you will be astonished at the steady growth of just appreciation.

Below-stairs, so much depends upon the temper and tendencies of the queen of the kitchen,—the cook,—it is almost impossible to make any general rule for the ordering of our servants' home life. That the kitchen may be made an abode of pleasantness, every one can attest who has invaded that "haunt

of ancient peace" in a New England country dwelling. There assemble all things sweet-smelling, appetizing, wholesome (barring the pies!), heart-cheering. The tins shine like the finest silver-ware; the very boards are fragrant. This is not common in New York kitchens; but a great deal may be done to render those under-ground prisons less gloomy. The servants' sitting-room, generally found in houses where a number of maids are kept, can be made inviting at very small cost. One is apt to underrate the influence of a pot of scarlet geraniums in a basement window, behind clear white muslin curtains, open to catch every wandering shaft of sunshine. Let your cook keep her parrot, if his voice penetrate not too sharply to the regions above. Compliment her neat shelves of blue china, choose her kitchen oil-cloth with a view to brightening her domain, buy for her pretty striped Algerian cotton table-cloths, leave a chair or two below that are not as hard as the nether mill-stone, when tired bones seek a moment of repose. Depend upon it, these little acts of thoughtfulness will come back to you in your roasts, in your gravies and your puddings, even if there were no higher motive for displaying them.

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### *THE EXPRESSION OF ROOMS.*

ROOMS have just as much expression as faces. They produce just as strong an impression on us at first sight. The instant we cross the threshold of a room, we know certain things about the person who lives in it. The walls and the floor, and the tables and chairs, all speak out at once, and betray some of their owner's secrets. They tell us whether she is neat or unneat, orderly or disorderly, and more than all, whether she is of a cheerful, sunny temperament, and loves beauty in all things, or is dull and heavy, and does not know pretty things from ugly ones. And just as these traits in

a person act on us, making us happy and cheerful, or gloomy and sad, so does the room act upon us. We may not know, perhaps, what it is that is raising or depressing our spirits; we may not suspect that we could be influenced by such a thing; but it is true, nevertheless.

I have been in many rooms in which it was next to impossible to talk with any animation or pleasure, or to have any sort of good time. They were dark and dismal; they were full of ugly furniture, badly arranged; the walls and the floors were covered with hideous colors; no two things seemed to belong together, or to have any relation to each other; so that the whole effect on the eye was almost as torturing as the effect on the ear would be of hearing a band of musicians playing on bad instruments, and all playing different tunes.

I have also been in many rooms where you could not help having a good time, even if there were nothing especial going on in the way of conversation or amusement, just because the room was so bright and cozy. It did you good simply to sit still there. You almost thought you would like to go sometimes when the owner was away, and you need not talk with anybody but the room itself.

In very many instances, the dismal rooms were the rooms on which a great deal of money had been spent, and the cozy rooms belonged to people who were by no means rich. Therefore, since rooms can be made cozy and cheerful with very little money, I think it is right to say that it is every woman's duty to make her rooms cozy and cheerful. I do not forget that I am speaking to girls who are for the most part living in their parents' houses, and who have not, therefore, the full control of their own rooms. But it is precisely during these years of life that the habits and tastes are formed; and the girl who allows her own room in her father's house to be untidy and unadorned, will inevitably, if she ever has a house of her own, let that be untidy and unadorned too.

There is not a reader of this paragraph, I am sure, who does not have in the course of the year pocket-money enough to do a great deal toward making her room beautiful. There



is not one whose parents do not spend for her, on Christmas and New Year's and her birthday, a sum of money, more or less, which they would gladly give to her, if she preferred it, to be spent in adorning her room.

It is not at all impossible that her parents would like to give her also a small sum to be spent in ornamenting the common living-room of the house. This is really a work which daughters ought to do, and which busy, tired mothers would be very glad to have them do, if they show good taste in their arrangements. The girl who cares enough and understands enough about the expression of rooms to make her own room pretty, will not be long content while her mother's rooms are bare and uninviting, and she will come to have a new standard of values in the matter of spending-money as soon as she begins to want to buy things to make rooms pretty.

How much better to have a fine plaster cast of Apollo or Clytie, than a gilt locket, for instance! How much better to have a heliotype picture of one of Raphael's or Correggio's Madonnas, than seventy-five cents' worth of candy! Six shillings will buy the heliotype, and three dollars the Clytie and Apollo both.

No! It is not a question of money; it is a question of taste; it is a question of choosing between good and beautiful things, and bad and ugly things—between things which last for years, and do you good every hour of every day, as often as you look at them, and things which are gone in an hour or a few days, and even for the few days or the hour do harm rather than good.

Therefore, I think it is right to say that it is the duty of every one to have his or her rooms cheerful and cozy and, as far as possible, beautiful—the duty of every man and woman, the duty of every boy and girl.

Volumes have been written to give minute directions for all the things which help to make rooms cozy and cheerful and beautiful, and I often see these volumes lying on tables in very dismal rooms. The truth is, these recipes are like many recipes

for good things to eat—it takes a good cook, in the beginning, to know how to make use of the recipe. But there are some first principles of the art which can be told in a very few words.

The first essential for a cheerful room is sunshine. Without this, money, labor, taste, are all thrown away. A dark room cannot be cheerful; and it is as unwholesome as it is gloomy. Flowers will not blossom in it; neither will people. Nobody knows, or ever will know, how many men and women have been killed by dark rooms.

“Glorify the room! Glorify the room!” Sydney Smith used to say of a morning, when he ordered every blind thrown open, every shade drawn up to the top of the window. Whoever is fortunate enough to have a south-east or south-west corner room, may, if she chooses, live in such floods of sunny light that sickness will have hard work to get hold of her; and as for the blues, they will not dare to so much as knock at her door.

Second on my list of essentials for a cheerful room I put—color. Many a room that would otherwise be charming is expressionless and tame for want of bright color. Don't be afraid of red. It is the most kindling and inspiring of colors. No room can be perfect without a good deal of it. All the shades of scarlet or of crimson are good. In an autumn leaf, in a curtain, in a chair-cover, in a pin-cushion, in a vase, in the binding of a book—everywhere you put it, it makes a brilliant point and gives pleasure. The blind say that they always think red must be like the sound of a trumpet; and I think there is a deep truth in their instinct. It is the gladdest, most triumphant color everywhere.

Next to red comes yellow; this must be used very sparingly. No bouquet of flowers is complete without a little touch of yellow; and no room is as gay without yellow as with it. But a bouquet in which yellow predominates is ugly; the colors of all the other flowers are killed by it; and a room which has one grain too much of yellow in it is hopelessly ruined. I have seen the whole expression of one side of a room altered, improved, toned up, by the taking out of two or

three bright yellow leaves from a big sheaf of sumacs and ferns. The best and safest color for walls is a delicate cream color. When I say best and safest, I mean the best background for bright colors and for pictures, and the color which is least in danger of disagreeing with anything you may want to put upon it. So also with floors; the safest and best tint is a neutral gray. If you cannot have a bare wooden floor, either of black walnut, or stained to imitate it, then have a plain gray felt carpet. Above all things, avoid bright colors in a carpet. In rugs, to lay down on a plain gray, or on a dark-brown floor, the brighter the colors the better. The rugs are only so many distinct pictures, thrown up into relief here and there by the under-tint of gray or brown. But a pattern, either set or otherwise, of bright colors journeying up and down, back and forth, breadth after breadth, on a floor, is always and forever ugly. If one is so unfortunate as to enter on the possession of a room with such a carpet as this, or with a wall-paper of a similar nature, the first thing to be done, if possible, is to get rid of them or cover them up. Better have a ten-cent paper of neutral tints, and indistinguishable figures on the wall, and have bare floors painted brown or gray.

Third on my list of essentials for making rooms cozy, cheerful, and beautiful, come books and pictures. Here some persons will cry out: "But books and pictures cost a great deal of money." Yes, books do cost money, and so do pictures; but books accumulate rapidly in most houses where books are read at all; and if people really want books, it is astonishing how many they contrive to get together in a few years without pinching themselves very seriously in other directions.

As for pictures costing money, how much or how little they cost depends on what sort of pictures you buy. As I said before, you can buy for six shillings a good heliotype (which is to all intents and purposes as good as an engraving) of one of Raphael's or Correggio's Madonnas. But you can buy pictures much cheaper than that. A Japanese fan is a picture; some of them are exquisite pictures, and blazing with color, too. They cost anywhere from two to six cents. There are

also Japanese pictures, printed on coarse paper, some two feet long and one broad, to be bought for twenty-five cents each; with a dozen of these, a dozen or two of fans, and say four good heliotypes, you can make the walls of a small room so gay that a stranger's first impression on entering it will be that it is adorned for a festival. The fans can be pinned on the walls in endlessly picturesque combinations. One of the most effective is to pin them across the corners of the room, in overlapping rows, like an old-fashioned card-rack.

And here let me say a word about corners. They are wofully neglected. Even in rooms where very much has been done in way of decoration, you will see all the four corners left bare—forcing their ugly sharp right angle on your sight at every turn. They are as ugly as so many elbows! Make the four corners pretty, and the room is pretty, even if very little else be done. Instead of having one stiff, straight-shelved book-case hanging on the wall, have a carpenter put triangular shelves into the corners. He will make them for thirty cents apiece, and screw them on the walls. Put a dozen books on each of the lower shelves, a bunch of autumn leaves, a pretty vase, a little bust of Clytie, or a photograph on a small easel, on the upper ones, and with a line of Japanese fans coming down to meet them from the cornice, the four corners are furnished and adorned. This is merely a suggestion of one out of dozens of ways in which walls can be made pleasant to look at without much cost.

If the room has chintz curtains, these shelves will look well covered with the same chintz, with a plaited ruffle tacked on their front edge. If the room has a predominant color, say a green carpet, or a border on the walls of claret or crimson, the shelves will look well with a narrow, straight border of billiard-cloth or baize (to match the ruling color of the room) pinked on the lower edge, and tacked on. Some people put on borders of gay colors, in embroidery. It is generally unsafe to add these to a room, but sometimes they have a good effect.

Fourth on my list of essentials for a cozy, cheerful room, I put order. This is a dangerous thing to say, perhaps; but it is



my honest conviction that sunlight, color, books, and pictures come before order. Observe, however, that while it comes fourth on the list, it is *only* fourth; it is by no means last! I am not making an exhaustive list. I do not know where I should stop if I undertook that. I am mentioning only a few of the first principles—the essentials. And in regard to this very question of order, I am partly at a loss to know how far it is safe to permit it to lay down its law in a room. I think almost as many rooms are spoiled by being kept in too exact order as by being too disorderly. There is an apparent disorder which is not disorderly; and there is an apparent order which is only a witness to the fact that things are never used. I do not know how better to state the golden mean on this point than to tell the story of an old temple which was once discovered, bearing on three of its sides this inscription: "Be bold." On the fourth side the inscription: "Be not too bold."

I think it would be well written on three sides of a room: "Be orderly." On the fourth side: "But don't be too orderly."

I read once in a child's letter a paragraph somewhat like this:

"I look every day in the glass to see how my countenance is growing. My nurse has told me that every one creates his own countenance; that God gives us our faces, but we can make a good or bad countenance by thinking good or bad thoughts, keeping a good or bad temper."

I have often thought of this in regard to rooms. When we first take possession of a room, it has no especial expression, perhaps—at any rate, no expression peculiar to us: but day by day we create its countenance, and at the end of a few years it is sure to be a pretty good reflection of our own.

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## WINDOW-BOXES.

WHEN winter has taken possession of the outside world, whirled the last leaf from the vine, seared the grasses, and hidden even the evergreen branches in snow, then window-boxes begin their reign. It is pleasant to glance from the fire and see them basking in the sunshine—green mossy banks, simulating the vanished summer. Nor need the plants be costly nor the boxes of expensive material. Given fresh mosses and leaves, a few trailing creepers, and a spike or two of flowers, and the effect must be charming, whether framed in enamel or zinc, in ebony or deal. And for those who are ambitious only of such effect, there are a dozen cheap and feasible methods of securing it.

The box may be of tin, painted green, or of common white pine, stained and oiled, with a strip of molding or a few lichens and fir-cones tacked on by way of ornament. Or, prettier still, it may be turned into a rustic affair by covering it with narrow horizontal lengths of rough-barked wood. Birch boughs or laurel, or both alternating, will answer, halved lengthwise with the saw, and cut into sections to fit the box, the shelf which supports it being edged with the same. Or a gayly colored affair may be made with narrow strips of oil-cloth, finished off with a wooden molding at top and bottom, a set pattern being chosen, of bright, solid colors, like the tiles which are so much in vogue for more expensive arrangements. In either case, unless the window-seat is of unusual width, a strong pine shelf must be adjusted in the recess to support the box, and the edge which fronts the room must be ornamented or stained to match.

The one essential of window-gardening is *sun*. That secured, the rest is easy. A south window, with a shade which can be raised or lowered at pleasure, is best.

The box provided and the shelf set, begin operations by a bottom layer of broken charcoal.

It is well to have the larger plants in pots, both for convenience of removal and to obviate the need of *box* drainage, which is a troublesome thing in a parlor. Set the pots on top



A GROUP OF FERNS.





of the charcoal, arranging according to fancy, but keeping the taller plants in the middle. Free, hardy bloomers, such as fuchsias, tea-roses, geraniums,—scarlet, rose, and white,—carnations, Chinese primroses, do better in the house, as a general thing, than tropical ferns and begonias, which are so temptingly beautiful in conservatories and perish so quickly out of them. One or two foliage plants, also, a coleus, "*Aturanthus*," or a silver-leaved myrtle, will be pretty, and two or three German and English ivies. Fill in around the pots with light, friable soil, one-fifth sand, and smooth the top over so as to cover the pots. Now, into the interstices you may tuck smaller plants—mignonette, lobelia, sweet alyssum, crocus and jonquil bulbs, ivy, geranium, moneywort. There should be a madeira vine or two to arch the window and twinkle across the upper panes. Last of all, cover the surface with mosses fresh from the woods, amid whose roots will be tangled all sorts of sweet wild things, partridge berry, tiny ferns, cranberry vine, and a dozen more. Water well, and sprinkle the surface every day with a fine rose or a whisk-broom. Later in the season, as some plant grows yellow or dull, you can lift it out carefully and insert a new one,—a hyacinth with white or purple bells, a tall spiked heath, a baby cactus, or Jerusalem cherry with fruit of coral,—and the sudden brightening of the whole, by virtue of the new addition, will startle you into fresh pleasure, like the lovely surprises of the spring.

The water used for the plants should be tempered slightly when the weather is very cold. It is a good plan to keep a wet sponge hidden somewhere about the box. All furnace-warmed houses are dry, and the more water evaporated into the air the better. Evaporizers of unglazed clay for the registers are of great assistance. They are made to hold a gallon, and will evaporate that quantity of water daily in the register of an ordinary furnace. "Inspiration," and good-humor, too, are very apt to "go down through that hole in the floor," as nerves and temper give way under the strain of dry heat, and the addition of four quarts of moisture daily to the air of the sitting-room in which you live will be found of sensible benefit to your plants, your furniture, and yourself.

*A FERNERY.*

IF there be an ugly jog on the north side of the cottage, where, perhaps, the eaves drip and no sunlight falls, but on whose unsightliness a window opens, transform it into a fernery. On any rainy day send a man and a cart to the nearest woods, and let him bring down a load of ferns and brakes taken up with at least eight inches of earth clinging to them. It is better to take such as grow in the more open places, and then they pine less for the old shade. Have six or seven inches of the hard-packed soil taken out, and the ferns carefully set in their new home, block to block, the spaces between being filled with black earth, and all the roots covered with moss from the woods. Then for two or three days syringe them all at dusk, and whenever the weather is very dry remember the same kindness. And the pretty green things will hardly droop till frosts come. We have some great swaying creatures, four feet high when they were transplanted, weeks ago, which have not dropped a leaf. There is a tangle of wild vines among them, and a group of calla lilies is in bloom on the balcony which the ferns border. A dining-room window opens on them, and to see this waving fernery through the half-closed blinds is to see in imagination the glory of the tropics, yet to feel the coolness of deep northern woods.

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*FLOWERS IN WINTER, AND HOW TO MAKE  
THE MOST OF THEM.*

WE all can have flowers in summer; but flowers in winter are, to most of us, a rare treat, only to be indulged in occasionally. Yet, I think we need them more then, and enjoy them more than at any other time, for our northern winters are so long and cruel that without flowers we are in

danger of forgetting that there ever was a summer. A bouquet never seems so precious as on one of those icy days when the world is so hopelessly frozen that it seems as if it never could bear another green thing. We touch the roses and the pinks with tender fingers and a feeling which we do not have for garden flowers—prosperous creatures, who take care of themselves and require none of our love and pity. These few sweet winter blooms are the survivors of a great massacre. Even now their lives are in danger, for if the window were to be opened ever so little, winter would slip treacherously through and kill them as he did their mates. So we pet and cherish the beautiful things, doing all we can to make them happy, and they reward us in their own pretty way by living twice as long as cut flowers in summer ever do.

There are various recipes for keeping bouquets fresh. Some people stick them in moist sand; some salt the water in the vases, and others warm it; others, again, use a few drops of ammonia. My rule is, to *cool the flowers* thoroughly at night. When the long day of furnace-heat has made the roses droop and their stems limp and lifeless, I clip them a little, and set them to float in a marble basin full of very cold water. In the morning they come out made over into crisp beauty, as fresh and blooming as if just gathered. All flowers, however, will not stand this water-cure. Heliotrope blackens and falls to pieces under it; azaleas drop from their stems, and mignonette soaks away its fragrance. For these I use dry, cold air. I wrap them in cotton wool, and set them on a shelf in the ice-chest! I can almost hear you laugh, but really I am not joking. Flowers thus treated keep perfectly for a week with me, and often longer.

Many persons who are lucky enough to have flowers do not at all know how to arrange them so as to produce the best effect, while others seem born with a knack for doing such things in just the right way. Knack cannot be taught, but there are a few rules and principles on the subject so simple that even a child can understand and follow them, and if you will keep them in mind when you have flowers to arrange, I

think you will find them helpful. Just as flowers are the most beautiful decoration which any house can have, so the proper management of them is one of the gracefulest of arts, and everything which makes home prettier and more attractive is worth study and pains, so I will tell you what these rules are, in the hope that you will use and apply them yourselves.

*First.* The *color* of the vase to be used is of importance. Gaudy reds and blues should never be chosen, for they conflict with the delicate hues of the flowers. Bronze or black vases, dark green, pure white, or silver, always produce a good effect, and so does a straw basket, while clear glass, which shows the graceful clasping of the stems, is perhaps prettiest of all.

*Second.* The shape of the vase is also to be thought of. For the middle of a dinner-table, a round bowl is always appropriate, or a tall vase with a saucer-shaped base. Or, if the center of the table is otherwise occupied, a large conch shell, or shell-shaped dish, may be swung from the chandelier above, and with plenty of vines and feathering green, made to look very pretty. Delicate flowers, such as lilies of the valley and sweet-peas, should be placed by themselves in slender, tapering glasses; violets should nestle their fragrant purple in some tiny cup, and pansies be set in groups, with no gayer flowers to contradict their soft velvet hues; and—this is a hint for summer—few things are prettier than balsam-blossoms, or double variegated hollyhocks, massed on a flat plate, with a fringe of green to hide the edge. No leaves should be interspersed with these; the plate will look like a solid mosaic of splendid color.

*Third.* *Stiffness* and crowding are the two things to be specially avoided in arranging flowers. What can be uglier than the great tasteless bunches into which the ordinary florist ties his wares, or what more extravagant? A skillful person will untie one of these, and, adding green leaves, make the same flowers into half a dozen bouquets, each more effective than the original. Flowers should be grouped as they grow, with a cloud of light foliage in and about them to set off their forms and colors. Don't forget this.



*Fourth.* It is better, as a general rule, not to put more than one or two sorts of flowers into the same vase. A great bush with roses, and camellias, and carnations, and feverfew, and geraniums growing on it all at once would be a frightful thing to behold; just so a monstrous bouquet made up of all these flowers is meaningless and ugly. Certain flowers, such as heliotrope, mignonette, and myrtle, mix well with everything; but usually it is better to group flowers with their kind—roses in one glass, geraniums in another, and not try to make them agree in companies.

*Fifth.* When you do mix flowers, be careful not to put colors which clash side by side. Scarlets and pinks spoil each other: so do blues and purples, and yellows and mauves. If your vase or dish is a very large one, to hold a great number of flowers, it is a good plan to divide it into thirds or quarters, making each division perfectly harmonious within itself, and then blend the whole with lines of green and white, and soft neutral tint. Every group of mixed flowers requires one little touch of yellow to make it vivid; but this must be skillfully applied. It is good practice to experiment with this effect. For instance, arrange a group of maroon, scarlet, and white geraniums with green leaves, and add a single blossom of gold-colored calceolaria; you will see at once that the whole bouquet seems to flash out and become more brilliant.

*Lastly.* Love your flowers. By some subtle sense the dear things always detect their friends, and for them they will live longer and bloom more freely than they ever will for a stranger. And I can tell you, girls, the sympathy of a flower is worth winning, as you will find out when you grow older, and realize that there are such things as dull days, which need cheering and comforting.

## WINDOW-GARDENING.

VERY few city housekeepers have found themselves possessed of a dozen square feet of back-yard, or a window opening to the south, who have not tried gardening in one or both, usually with most impotent conclusions. They had some paradisaical vision before them of the beds of sweetness and color, the dusky alleys and nests of greenery, about some friend's country-seat. They attempted the same in miniature, only to find their tiny grass-plot dusty and dock-grown, their vines barren stems, their hardy climbers, "warranted to run up twenty feet the first season," stopping short to die in as many inches. This in spite of all scientific appliance, manuring, mulching, and leaf-mold, or untiring practice with patent syringes or scissors. The very flowers which creep from one village garden to another, bold invaders to be drawn out with hoe and rake, dwindle into pale, leafless stalks in the artistic *jardinière*, and will not be coaxed into life by tenderest care. The first mistake made by our amateur city gardener is to ignore the poisonous air in which she essays to rear her frail charges. No tender or half-hardy plant will survive two weeks' confinement in rooms heated by furnaces and lighted by gas. If there be an open fire-place in the house, it would be wise to keep this class of plants solely in this apartment. If there be no open fire-place, we earnestly advise our householder to purchase one. It will cost her less than a good engraving, and will not only fill the room with pictures, but help the little ones to rosy cheeks. If we could sketch for her a certain cozy sitting-room, it would convert her more surely than any argument. There is a big fire in the recesses of a quaint-carved wooden fire-place; bear-skins, on which the dog and boys romp or sleep together; and glass-doors open into a little chamber filled with ferns, ivy, and all wood-growths. The air of this chamber is warmed from the inner room; the outer walls, of course, are glass. On a winter's day, there are glimpses, through the mosses and vines, of the snow outside. A woman who cannot afford a Meissonier can compass this,

and so bring a great pleasure and brightness into her children's memory of home.

If the open fire, however, be unattainable, she must limit her attempt at gardening to the hardiest of plants. Ivy—that is, the English varieties—will defy dry heat and gas, if the leaves are frequently washed; while the begonias flourish in the poison with a Borgian delight.

Very pretty effects may be produced, too, at the cost of a few cents, by planting verbenas, morning-glories, cobea scandens, and the maurandias in baskets or flower-pots, which can be concealed behind statuary or bronzes. They will grow luxuriantly, with blossoms which are miniatures of those which they yield in summer. The best fertilizer which can be applied to them, or to any other house-plants, is that afforded by the tea-pot. The cold tea-grounds which the Irish throw on the hearth as an offering to the lares, if poured as a libation to these household fairies, will produce a miracle of beauty and perfume.

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### *DON'T GIVE UP THE GARDEN!*

IF, as the illustrious Verulam asserts, a garden be “the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man,” one would naturally conclude that the refreshment ought to be available when most needed—namely, in the fierce midsummer heats. But how few gardens do we find in full beauty in July and August! Most people give up their gardens about this time; others hold on pretty well until the first light frosts, when they seem to think that all is over, and retire from the field. I have a garden in my mind's eye that belongs to one of these Faint-hearts; it was trim and gay in April, gorgeous in June; but toward the middle of July there was a perceptible falling-off. Flowers were allowed to go to seed, the grass was not cut often enough, and weeds began to show their heads; and in October,

if I had not watched the rise and fall of this floral empire, I should not have suspected that there had been even an attempt at floriculture in the vicinity. Less than a mile from this ruined Eden lies a garden that is attractive for nine months in the year. This is the beloved domain of a born gardener—an Eve, who smilingly says, pointing to her floral treasures, “I have got back to Paradise.” When asked the secret of her success, she replied: “I work a little in my garden every day. Flowers are like children—to thrive, they must have constant and loving care.” I went to see my Eve one day last fall, after the frost had set in. I found her in the garden, shears in hand, clipping off frosted flowers; here and there a tender plant had been killed, but most of the flowers looked as bright as in June. Many flowers will bear a good deal of frost, and if the injured ones are removed, the garden may be kept presentable quite into the edge of winter—especially if there be a goodly collection of chrysanthemums, and a reserve of pansies in the cold-frame or seed-bed. Pansies for late blooming should be sown in June, and the flowering retarded by removing the buds; then they will burst forth with wonderful beauty in the cool autumn weather, and will endure considerable frost; though it is best to protect them at night. After even these hardy blooms have succumbed, much may be done to facilitate spring work. New beds should always be laid out in the fall, especially where sod is to be moved, for, if it is turned under, it will rot during the winter, and so make the best of flower-food. Then the hardy bulbs must not be forgotten. Tulips should be more generally planted than they are; the price (fifty cents per dozen for mixed varieties) brings them within the reach of all. A neighbor last fall was induced by my representations to invest a small sum in Parrot tulips, and this spring her little garden-plot was the show-place of the country-side. A fine Parrot tulip, to him who sees it for the first time, must indeed be a revelation. Many kinds of annuals do best when sown in the fall. Lists of seeds for fall sowing may be found in the floral catalogues, but I have never seen either petunias or verbenas in these lists; yet both will seed them-



selves, and all flowers that do this may be safely planted in the fall. My verbenas last year were all from self-sown seed, and they were never more varied and beautiful. There was a good assortment of the verbenas colors, with fine, large trusses of bloom, and they were delightfully fragrant besides. They are not constant, however, and new seed should be procured frequently from some reliable florist, and this should be started in the hot-bed, for florists' seed is often several years old, and will not always germinate readily. It is a good plan to have verbenas succeed hardy bulbs; treated in this way they are very little trouble, and there is no hurry about getting them into bloom, if one has even a small collection of good perennials. They come along in time to take the place of the sweet-williams, columbines, pinks, lilies, and June roses. Yonder in the grass-plot are three circular beds that have sown themselves for several years in succession. One is a bed of Drummond phlox; one contains petunias, and the other verbenas. They are always covered in the fall with their own growths, and sometimes leaves are added. Early in the spring the covering is removed, and a dressing of leaf-mold from the woods is applied; then they are protected by light brush and left to sun and shower.

When the seedlings come up they will generally require thinning and a little arrangement, as they will not be always evenly distributed over the beds. Borders of white candytuft are very pretty for beds set in the green grass; but it must not be sown too soon, as it blooms early and does not last long. These beds require renovating once in three or four years. I dug up one of mine this spring, and the excavation we made was so considerable that it attracted general observation. Opinions were divided on the subject. One neighbor feelingly inquired if we were digging a grave. Some thought we must be going to build a cave or an ice-house; another suggested a grasshopper-trap; but that it was nothing but a posy-bed nobody would believe.

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*FALL WORK IN THE ROSE-GARDEN.*

THE fall months afford a very favorable season for starting new plantations of roses.

All of the improved varieties are apt to be covered with a fresh and profuse bloom in September or later, and after the flowers drop, the buds will be found in the state best adapted for putting forth new shoots, and the process of rooting will also take place readily if slips are now cut from the parent stem, and set out and properly cared for in suitable soil.

If it is desired to make the attempt on a large scale, select a spot in your garden close to a north wall, or, at least, so situated as to be protected in some way against the blasts of the north wind. Dig out the ground, if of hard clay, to the depth of one foot, making a trench about one yard long, and filling it half up with rich manure; then put in a layer of good garden-loam, and on top of that at least three inches of clear sand. Set in your slips with their lower ends slanting from the north, and be sure to fix them firmly in the sand. Let the slips be placed about four inches apart. They will need no protection from sunshine, unless the weather is exceptionally hot. But when the winter approaches, cover them with boughs of evergreen, or with a slight structure of a few planks. Leave them undisturbed till the weather has become settled in spring, when many of them will be found to have taken root. Prepare the ground into which they are to be transplanted just as for tomato-plants, and do not let the distance between them be less than three feet. We find that roses grown in this way, at home, make much more vigorous, hardy plants than those forced by the florists in hot-beds; the experiment having been tried of raising them side by side, it was found that in one year those grown at home had gained largely upon those purchased abroad.

Roses may also be propagated from the slip by rooting them in water, and then transferring them to small pots, where they can remain until large enough to take their permanent places upon the lawn or in the flower-garden. The water

should be put in black or dark-green bottles, and a little raw cotton wrapped around the slip. The water need not be changed except occasionally, but the bottles must always be kept filled up to the neck.

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### ROSES.

“**I**S there,” asks Mr. Tennyson, “any moral hid within the bosom of a rose?”

We cannot say. Certain it is that something else lurks there; something at once less obvious and more deadly; something which defies inquest—almost defies remedy; and the name of that something is SLUGS.

From beginning to end of summer, Nature takes apparent pleasure in teasing and tantalizing us. Her fairest things she abandons to her foulest. Each month brings its destroyer—the currant-worm with the currants, the measure-worm with the elm foliage—and so on, until the latest caterpillar chews a horrible path through every leaf spared by earlier hosts, spins its cocoon, and lies down to die.

The gladiolus has its foe—a mailed creature fearful to encounter. Tiny emerald beetles skip over the edges of the geraniums. Red spiders assemble from Heaven knows where, and spin and devastate. Aphides in countless hosts appear as from the atmosphere, and take possession. “Little things on little wings,” with stings far from little, puncture the grape-leaves and gall the fuchsias. But most of all, the roses—sweetest and fairest sisterhood—seem marked for destruction.

Hardly have their soft, crimson-tufted buds unrolled than the ravage begins. You bend lovingly over your pet “Giant of Bautes” or “General Jacque Moneau,” and start aghast. Why are the leaves twisted thus strangely over the coming buds, and cemented together as by a wiry glue? The experienced know well the cause, and applying a finger and

thumb artistically, give a pinch. Aha! a black and green head wriggles into view. He is there, "Thalaba the Destroyer"—that slug whom, in defiance of Mr. Warner, we pronounce the "saddest" of the year.

Talk of promptitude—he is always *before* time. Early bird must it be indeed who picks up that worm! Before human vision detects the delicate unfolding bud, he has gorged himself with essence of bloom, and the bud is an empty shell. We pinch and pinch with stern determination, regardless of cold chills down our spines—and still the creeping creature defies us, and the harvest of beauty is snatched from our grasp.

Is there, then, no remedy? Yes. Let others prate of tobacco washes and whale-oil soap. *Our* spell is couched in two magic words. They are—"white hellebore."

This blessed dust—worth its weight in gold—may be had at moderate price at any chemist's. Salute it. It is not the rose—but it comes near to being so, for it saves the rose.

Dissolved in water (proportion, a half-pound to a half-barrel), and applied with a syringe, it coats each leaf with a faint gray sediment. Over this, while wet, a little dry powder should be dredged. The slug, taking, as is his wont, an early constitutional on top of the leaves, absorbs this refreshing aliment, and is found at nine P. M. swollen, black, and dead as Pharaoh. Very early risers may even enjoy the delight of applying the dose directly to the spine of the invader, and watching the effect!

A few days—and our heel is on the neck of the enemy. And then, ah! then, how the fresh leaves laugh and twinkle! how the cups of cream and fire and snow unfold, and with what wafts of sweetness do they recompense the hand that brought deliverance! Conquerors and conquered, we bow before the spell of beauty, and inscribe upon our oriflamb ( "which," as the Bab Ballad remarks, "is pretty, though I don't know what it means") the name of the herb which tempted fair Juliet to her death, but to our rescued favorites has been a word of healing.

Remember, *white hellebore*.



*A PLANT-STAND.*

THE lack of a desirable place to keep plants often prevents the pleasure of raising them. They must have light, and air, and sunshine, and it is not always convenient to devote the brightest windows to their occupancy. If kept on the ledges, they are in danger of being chilled on a frosty night; and it is a tax to be compelled to move the heavy pots every time the thermometer drops. A flower-stand of some sort, that can be readily moved from window to window is, therefore, a necessity. The old-fashioned wooden ones are clumsy, heavy, and take up too much room. The modern wire frames are pretty and light; but one of moderate size costs ten or twelve dollars, which is a great deal to put in the stand when we wish to put it in the flowers.

We saw something, the other day, that seemed to serve both economy and convenience. A box three feet long, a foot and a half wide across the bottom, and eighteen inches deep, is made of common pine. The sides flare outward, so that, at the top, they measure six or eight inches more, from edge to edge, than at the bottom. This box stands on four legs with casters, and under the bottom of the box a piece of wood, fancifully cut on the edge (a sort of pine valance), holds the legs firmly and symmetrically together. The top of the box is nearly even with the window-sill, and when the whole is constructed, it may either be painted in colors, or stained dark-brown, to match the furniture wood. The inside of the box is better preserved from decay if lined with zinc or tin; but it will last one, possibly two, seasons, without any lining at all. Over the bottom is spread a three-inch layer of bits of broken flower-pots, and on this is set a double row of pots, or as many as will stand evenly on the surface. Then a thick layer of sand is poured over the broken pieces, and the rest of the space filled up with earth till it is even with the top of the flower-pots. In the bed thus formed, bulbs and slips are planted between the pots, and vines are started at the corners. When the latter are well under way, wires on which the vines twist are

fastened diagonally from corner to corner, forming a beautiful green arch over what seems to be a bed taken bodily from the garden. Sometimes a tiny hanging-basket, or an ivy growing in water, is hung from where the wires cross in the arch, but, even without it, there is no appearance of bareness. A carpenter will make the box for two dollars and a half, and the rest, painting and all, can readily be done at home.

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### *A MINIATURE FERNERY.*

WE were out in the woods for a day's pleasuring—riding along neglected old roads, leading to nowhere in particular; stopping in a shady glen, beside a cool, dark brook, to eat our hearty lunch, and wandering about in search of whatever we could find. Our search was amply rewarded, for we had soon loaded ourselves with woodland treasures in the shape of moss, grasses, delicate vines, tiny two-leaved maples and baby evergreens, clusters of ferns, which we dug up with the roots and some of the soil adhering to them; and long sprays of ground-pine, and glossy "squaw-vine," with its bright crimson berries. We brought home our trophies in triumph, and proceeded to make a "fernery," after our own fashion. Taking a large platter, we arranged the ferns carefully on it, filling in with the green moss and graceful, drooping grasses, which also had roots (as, indeed, had everything we brought), and trailing the vines over all; then we placed it on a little stand, which was twined with the evergreen ground-pine, and had a lovely "woodsy" affair at no cost but the pleasure of gathering and arranging. We watered the platter every day, and, after the lapse of several weeks, the ferns and all are as fresh and healthy as when first gathered, and every day some new wonder unfolds itself; new ferns are coming up out of the mold; little wood violets are growing, and the pipsissewa has had a blossom that rivals the trailing arbutus in delicacy and sweetness, while the bright berries glow in the green mosses.

## BRING FLOWERS.

OF course they will be growing in the gardens all summer, and (if we have a garden) we can go there and enjoy them. But this is not enough. We cannot be all the time in the garden, and we ought to have flowers in the house—especially in summer-time, for then they are not only so fresh and beautiful, but so free. We can then have flowers on our tables at every meal, and yet on their account we need not have one pound less of beefsteak, or stint ourselves of a single lump of sugar. But in winter we cannot always be so sure about this—particularly if we feel we need a good many flowers, and have to go to the florist's for them.

As to what flowers it is best to bring into the house and what to do with them after we have them there, we have all heard a great deal, and yet something useful may yet be said; and even if some of us have heard it before, it will do no harm—especially if we have forgotten it.

There are in every house a great many places where flowers will look well, but nowhere will they look better than on the table at meal-time. If we have more flowers than we need for that purpose we can put them all around—everywhere.

And it is easy enough to find something to put them in. If vases are not available, a bowl, a plate, a flat dish, or something of the kind, will do. If it is not pretty, cover it up with flowers and leaves. Small ivy-leaves, geranium-leaves, wood-mosses, and even parsley, and the graceful foliage of the common garden carrot, will so cover and adorn the edges and rim of a common soup-plate, that it might as well be a *jardinière* of Wedgwood ware, or a vase of Sèvres porcelain, for all we can see of it.

In regard to the flowers, we should be more particular. It will not do to jumble flowers together any way, without regard to form or color, and then expect a beautiful result. Nature never does anything of the kind herself, and her flowers are not intended for such bungling processes. There is scarcely a flower or leaf in the world that cannot be made more beautiful

by being placed by some other flower or leaf. It must be remembered that a much more beautiful effect is often produced by a few flowers than by a great mass of them. For instance: for a bouquet in a flat dish, the flowers of the pale-blue passion-flower will blend perfectly with an outer wreath of the palest pink roses, and any deep green foliage will set them off advantageously. If a finger-glass is placed in the middle of the dish, and a group of flowers arranged in a drooping bouquet over the passion-flowers, the effect is quite unique and lovely.

Scarlet and white geraniums, grouped with mignonette and their own leaves, are exceedingly effective, and the same may be said of China roses mingled with white and crimson carnations, with sprigs of heliotrope dotted hither and thither. Bright pink roses half-blown, and wreathed among lilies of the valley partly shrouded under the cool green of their own leaves, make a lovely combination.

The chief thing to attend to, in arranging such dishes of flowers, is to take the shades of colors that suit each other, and not mix purple and blue, scarlet and crimson.

As a general rule, all flowers of thin texture, and particularly those which combine with it a delicate color, are, if gathered, not only a loss to the garden-bed, but of little avail for house use. They are tempting to gather, because their fragile, pale colors look so pretty in the hand and bear close inspection, but they will not add anything to your vase or bouquet; for being thin and lacking in brilliancy of color, if they do not close by night-fall they will probably fall from the stalk and spoil your arrangement.

For the center of an upright vase of flowers, some grand flower like a cactus, a Japan lily, or a water-lily should be used, or a good cluster of carnations or pelargoniums will show well in a central position, with five or six carnations of various colors around it. If there is much scarlet in the vase, a few yellow-tinged flowers like the sprays of yellow calceolaria will show to advantage. Often a few clusters of one kind of flower, such as geraniums, with only their own leaves as a groundwork, will be exceedingly lovely.



White, pink, and crimson roses with their own leaves are extremely beautiful if arranged in one vase; for the great secret in these arrangements is only to seek to fitly display a pretty spray of flowers and foliage, not merely to fill a vase.

In the country, where fern-leaves abound, there are but few flowers needed to make very lovely bouquets; for if the ferns are lightly grouped together with only a few little flowers they form a more attractive group than they would if crowded into a vase.

Delicate, small flowers mingle better with the fronds of ferns than the larger and coarser flowers. A vase filled with ivy branches and only a few clusters of scarlet geraniums is really exquisite. Verbenas, too, look much prettier if arranged in vases by themselves than if mingled with a variety of flowers.

This style of arrangement may be objected to because one cannot always spare many flowers of any one kind, excepting verbenas and those that grow *en masse*; but yet only a few flowers are required to make an effective vase, and if there are several vases to fill, the flowers will go much farther if divided or grouped in this way; each vase could take one shade of color, such as pink, scarlet, crimson, lilac, etc.

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### PRACTICAL FLORICULTURE.

THE cultivation of plants for ornamental purposes, both for greenhouse and grounds, has made rapid progress during the past twenty years. It is estimated that there are upward of six hundred commercial florists' establishments within a radius of ten miles from the City Hall, New York, and that probably ten million dollars are invested in their lands, structures, and stock; and when it is known that the demand for horticulture in New York is hardly the average of that of other

cities of the Union, it will be seen that the business is an important industry. Formerly the practical work was entirely in the hands of European gardeners, but for the past fifteen or sixteen years many of our large floral establishments have been employing young Americans as assistants, taking only such as are qualified by education and intelligence to grasp the more intricate and scientific details of the business. The results from this are already shown in the fact that the American system of propagation and culture is perhaps unequaled in the world; and no better evidence can be given of the truth of this assertion than the fact—which any one may verify by a comparison of price-lists—that plants, on an average, are sold at one-third less here than in England, while our rates paid for labor are at least one-half higher. It may be interesting to give briefly in detail some of the leading operations of the business, beginning with propagation by seeds.

Whenever a plant can be increased by seeds, that plan is adopted in preference to cuttings, or any other method, not only because more vigorous plants are thus obtained, but because this method is simpler, cheaper, and quicker, where large quantities are wanted; and to the amateur in floriculture, or the florist living in sections of the country where plants could not conveniently be sent, seeds afford means of procuring varieties that it would be next to impossible to get in any other way. If the following plan is strictly adhered to, the most delicate plants can be raised from seeds in a common sitting-room or hot-bed just as well as in a fully appointed greenhouse: For the bed an ordinary sized soap-box may be used, cutting it into sections, and making these into boxes two inches deep, leaving the seams at the bottom wide enough to allow the water to pass off quickly. These shallow boxes should be filled with finely sifted soil, level with the top; and this soil should be pressed down with a board, making it as smooth and level as possible; on this surface the seeds should be sown and pressed gently down with the board, so as to sink them into the soil. Then dry *sphagnum* moss, cocoa-nut fiber, leaf-mold, or any light material, should be rubbed

through a mosquito-wire, and sifted on the seeds just enough to cover them. Either of these substances is better to cover seeds with than ordinary soil; owing to their sponge-like character, the proper degree of moisture is obtained, while their lightness offers but little resistance to the feeble germ. After covering, a gentle watering should be given with a fine-rose watering-pot; and if the seeds are placed in a temperature averaging sixty degrees, the young seedlings will begin to show themselves breaking through the covering in from six to twenty days, according to the nature of the plant. But in quite a number of species of plants there is a tendency to "damp off," as it is called, after germination; this is caused by a species of mildew that finds a congenial condition among the tender seedling plants which come up thickly huddled together. To avert this, as soon as the seedlings have shown the seed-leaf to be fully developed, and before the first rough or true leaf has formed, the tiny plants should be pricked off into boxes filled with soil of the same depth and dimensions as those used for the seeds. The seedlings should be planted with great care with a small dibber, about the size of a pencil, and pointed. After planting they should be gently watered, and shaded with paper for a few days until they take root.

Propagating by cuttings is always an interesting operation; and, to many, plants grown from slips of their own raising have a value far greater than if purchased when fully developed. Nearly all European writers on this subject have so befogged it with technical nonsense that few not regular professional florists have ever attempted it, unless on some of the commonest kinds of plants. It is now, however, considered one of our simplest operations, and any one with ordinary intelligence can perform it successfully if the following brief instructions are strictly followed: When plants are wanted in large quantities, elevate a bench above the flue or hot-water pipes to within a foot or so of a glass at the front, and on this bench place three or four inches of any ordinary clean sand. This bench should be boarded down in front, to confine the heat from the flue or pipes under it, so as to give what is

called "bottom heat." The sand on the bench so formed, during the winter season, when the greenhouse is fired, will indicate a temperature of sixty-five to seventy degrees, while the atmosphere of the greenhouse should be ten degrees less. Now if the cuttings or slips are in the right condition, and are inserted an inch or so in the sand, and freely watered, and shaded from the sun from nine or ten A. M. to three or four P. M., ninety-nine out of every hundred will take root in from ten to twenty days. The cutting or slip, however, must be in the right condition; this can be ascertained by a very simple test: if on bending the cutting or slip it snaps off short, it is all right for planting; but if it bends without breaking it is too old, and in this state it roots much more slowly and feebly.

There is another method of propagating by slips, and one which can be used by any one, with or without a greenhouse. It is known as the "saucer system." A saucer or plate should be filled with an inch or so of sand; then the slips, prepared in the usual manner, should be inserted in the sand about close enough to touch each other. The sand should then be watered to bring it to the condition of mud. Thus filled, the saucer is placed in a hot-bed, on the shelf of the greenhouse, or in a window exposed to the sun in the dwelling-house—in each case fully exposed to the sun, and never shaded. But one condition is essential to success: until the cuttings become rooted the sand must be kept continually saturated with water, and always in a condition of mud. Care must be taken in watering to do it gently, so as not to throw down the cutting, as it is essential that the cut part remain always in the mud. If the temperature of the room or greenhouse averages from sixty-five to eighty-five degrees, and if the cuttings were in the proper condition, success is certain, and finely rooted slips may be expected in from ten to twenty days from the time they were put in the saucers. A higher temperature may be maintained by the saucer system of propagating than by the other, as the slips are in reality placed in water, and will not wilt, provided the mud is not allowed to dry up. The popular idea that it is necessary to cut a slip at a joint or an eye is an





LAYERING IN THE AIR, AND LAYERING IN THE SOIL.



error ; it makes no difference whatever in the formation of roots, unless in such plants as have tuberous roots, like the dahlia, where a joint or eye is necessary, that the roots may develop eyes the next season.

Propagation of plants by leaves is another method employed, and one that is a never-ceasing source of wonder. When we examine a leaf of *Begonia rex*, chased and shaded like frosted or burnished silver, nothing indicates that there is anything about it any more than about any other leaf—that it has the germs of a score of lives dotted all over its beautiful surface. Yet we know that if one of these leaves, the veins being first cut across, is thrown down in any moist place, at a temperature of seventy or eighty degrees, in a month its surface becomes dotted all over with tiny plants, fac-similes, so to speak, of the “mother” leaf, which gives up her life for her offspring. *Bryophyllum calycinum* is another singular plant, which emits young plants from the serrated edge of the leaf. Single leaves, three by six inches in size, sometimes have as many as thirty young plants attached. The leaves of this plant are dropped on the ground while growing in the open air, and every one, large or small, at once develops its tiny progeny from the margins of the leaves ; or, if a leaf is taken off the plant and pinned against a moist wall, in a few weeks young plants are formed. Another family of plants, known as *Peperomia*, develop plants from the foot-stalk.

Propagation of plants by layering is another method often practiced by amateurs who require only a few plants, but is now very little used by the professional florist. The illustration shows the manner of cutting and pegging down in the soil the shoot of a rose-bush, so as to obtain a layered plant. The plant in the flower-pot is a variegated-leaved geranium, with some of the shoots cut so as to hang only by a portion of the bark. This plan of propagating is what is termed “layering in the air,” and I believe I was the first to originate it, about twelve years ago. This method has been found to be very useful in increasing variegated-leaved plants of such kinds as are liable to rot off when put in as ordinary slips or cuttings.

After being allowed to hang on the plant for ten or twelve days, the wound heals over, and, if the atmosphere is moist, roots will be emitted as the slip hangs on the plant; but, even if not, the healing over, or "callus," as it is technically termed, is the condition preparatory to rooting; and when these slips are detached and potted, nearly every slip will quickly form a rooted plant. Besides, it is a great advantage to the health of the old plant on which the slips have been "layered" not to detach them at once, as all propagators of plants know that, when many slips are taken off the plant at once, it lessens its vigor to such a degree as often to destroy it. "Layering in the air," however, is not only more certain in rooting the slips, but does little or no injury to the mother-plant.

The potting of plants is first begun by taking the rooted slips or cuttings from the cutting-bench or saucer, or the young seedlings from the boxes, and "potting" or planting them (in finely sifted soil) in small flower-pots, usually two inches wide and deep. After the slips have been thus potted in small pots, they should be freely watered and shaded for two or three days, until the roots begin to strike into the soil. According to the nature of the plant and the temperature which it is growing in, the young plants, in from four to eight weeks, will have matted the "ball" of earth on the outside, so that it shows a net-work of roots when knocked out of the pot. It is then in the condition to be placed in a larger flower-pot, or to be "shifted," as it is technically called. If the slip has been in a pot two inches in diameter—and at first it should never be placed in one much larger—it should be shifted into one three inches in diameter; if in a three-inch, to a four-inch, and so on until the size runs to six inches in diameter, when a somewhat larger shift may be given; if the pot is too large the plants will get water-logged. In the operation of shifting into the smaller sizes, a layer of swamp moss (*Sphagnum*), from half an inch to two inches in thickness, in proportion to size, should first be placed in the pot; over this a layer of soil should be placed, in quantity sufficient to raise the "ball" of the plant to be shifted to the proper height—say from half an inch to an inch below



the level of the rim of the flower-pot ; then, in the space left between the roots of the plant to be shifted and the side of the flower-pot, the soil should be packed moderately firm. Crocks or drainage, other than the *sphagnum*, in flower-pots is not necessary except the larger sizes—say six or seven inches in diameter and upward ; in these, in plants impatient of water at the roots, such as roses that are being grown for flowers in winter, a layer of an inch or so of broken charcoal or broken pots should be placed in the bottom of the pots, and over this a layer of *sphagnum*. But there is another matter of far more importance for drainage than the drainage of the flower-pot, and which is almost always lost sight of, namely, to have the plants placed on some rough material on the shelf or bench, such as gravel or cinders—anything, in fact, which, when the plants are placed on it, will allow the water to pass freely off, and at the same time admit air under the flower-pot. In cases where this would not be practicable—with very large pots, as when plants are grown in rooms in the dwelling-house—chips of wood, a quarter of an inch or so in thickness, placed under the flower-pot, would answer the same purpose. This means of draining and admission of air to the roots is, of course, much more of a necessity during winter than summer, as, particularly in the greenhouse, the air is often surcharged with moisture, while in summer there is usually too dry an atmosphere.

Plants are shipped by mail and express mainly, and the methods of packing are now so complete that, though the most tender plants are sent to every State and Territory in the Union, often being eight days in transit, it is rare that they fail to arrive in good condition. To any place where they can be sent by express they should never be mailed ; for not only are the plants always smaller that can be sent by post, but by compressing them into the limits of a mail package they are more or less crushed, and rarely arrive in as good order.

There is no flower-market in New York similar to that of the flower-market in Covent Garden, London. The plants sold as market plants are mixed up with other products, sold

on street corners, in stores, from wagons, peddled in baskets, and in every other conceivable way, to the great disadvantage of the buyer, who in this way has no chance to select a variety from any one place. The flower-market of Covent Garden is one of the great attractions of London, and there is no reason why such a market in New York would not be equally successful.

One modern style of flower-garden decoration is what is termed "ribbon-line" planting, or "massing in colors," which is found to be far more strikingly effective than that of the mixed border of twenty years ago, the materials being plants with contrasting colors of leaves—yellow, scarlet, white, carmine, bronze, crimson, etc. It is not unusual in some of the public parks, in the cities before named, to have ten thousand of such plants planted in one bed. Another style of this mode of planting is what is known as the "carpet pattern," or "mosaic system," which is done by using low, compact-growing, succulent plants, such as the different species of *Echeveria*, *Sedum*, *Sempervivum*, etc., from which the different shades of color are obtained, so as to get by the use of living plants an effect similar to carpet or mosaic work; and as the plants used grow only a few inches high, and are kept at a uniform height, the effect of such planting, framed in a green lawn, is very striking.

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